

IN
UNKNOWN
TUSCANY
—
EDWARD HUTTON

E. T. from A. T.

Kerns 1909.

IN UNKNOWN TUSCANY



MONT' AMIATA

IN UNKNOWN TUSCANY

BY

EDWARD HUTTON

AUTHOR OF "THE CITIES OF UMBRIA"

WITH NOTES BY

WILLIAM HEYWOOD

WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR

By O. F. M. WARD

AND TWENTY OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

A FEW words on the genesis of this book might seem to be called for. In the summer of 1907 I went up into Mont' Amiata, and moved by the extraordinary beauty and virility of that part of Central Italy as seen from the Mountain, I began to write down my impressions of it. Repetti's "Dizionario," that best of all books on Tuscany, written some eighty years ago, the "Commentaries" of Pio II. helped me with such historical facts as I needed, and in Barzellotti's "David Lazzeretti" I found the thoughts of a native of Mont' Amiata on all that had happened in the Mountain that was his home.

Just then—it was in August—my friend Mr. William Heywood came up into the Mountain from Perugia, and to my great advantage, as it

proved, decided to stay in Abbazia San Salvatore, where I was then living. Together we explored the Mountain and talked of its history. Knowing far more than I could hope to do of the sources of its history, he made me, so far as he was able in our walks and rides, a partaker of his knowledge, and at last, hearing what I was at, he placed at my disposal all his notes on the Mountain, and agreed to write for me an Appendix to the book.

So under his influence the book became a very different thing from what I had planned. It gained incalculably. A certain difference between us both in temperament and in intention—for while for him the fact was everything, for me it was little compared with the right expression of what I myself felt and saw—has helped, as I think, to give the book a strength it might otherwise have lacked, to set it square on the earth, so that the reader who comes to it first for historical facts will not be disappointed, for he cannot, indeed, find this information in any

other book in any language. This side of the book, then, its appeal to the student of Italian History, would have been infinitely less valuable—or even non-existent—if Mr. Heywood had not appeared at the opportune moment he did, or if, appearing, he had not given up a great part of his life to the study of Sienese History. And so while I am responsible for the text of the book, and he for the notes, without the assistance of which I have spoken the text would have been much less precise and much less valuable than I hope it is.

E. H.

CASA DI BOCCACCIO
COREIGNANO

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IN UNKNOWN TUSCANY

I

THE VISION

ONE evening in Siena, because of the noise and heat of the city, I had wandered up to the great half-forsaken church of the Servi di Maria for the sake of the silence and the wind. It was the hour before sunset. Behind me, on her hills, the beautiful pale city of the Virgin rose, as ever, with a certain strangeness in her beauty, a little hysterical maybe, as in that vast swooning Tower, that curiously over-expressive Palazzo Pubblico, that visionary Cathedral—a cathedral that had Jacopone da Todi been an architect instead of a poet he would perhaps have built. Here and there about the city among the olives, still full of the song of the *cicale*, the valleys broke in sudden bursts of green, where the gardens were lost in

the vineyards, the vineyards in the corn. Before me stretched the *contado*, a restless country of up-tossed, tawny hills, as in a picture by Piero della Francesca. And over that strange, arid world, where the little cities burned like precious stones, hovered Mont' Amiata, that beautiful, mysterious mountain, not too near, not too far away, very faint in the heat, the last outpost of Siena, looking towards Rome and the sea.

All day long that world of barren hills so strange, so fantastic, and so beautiful, had been like a hard, glowing jewel, in which everything less pure or less mysterious than the sun had been consumed in an astonishment of light. But presently, as I knew, the earth would be filled with a marvellous shadow ; a mysterious and solemn loveliness, almost poignant in the strange brevity of its passing, would fall upon the hills ; like some known and ancient sweetness the wind would come from the mountains, the wind that had passed over the sea. It was for that I was waiting after the heat of the day.

The whole world was longing for rain. Sometimes out of the silence a boy's voice rose shrilly below me among the drooping vines, singing *stornelli* ; from the little courtyard of a

podere, where the corn was strewn like a yellow carpet, came the rhythmic throb of the flails, like the murmur of summer itself, faint and far-off, as they beat out the grain; now and then, from the shadow hard by, came the subtle, delicious laughter of a little child playing alone: there was no other sound. Thus I waited in the shadow of the church for the wind from the sea. Suddenly, just within the city gate, I heard the rough voice of a *barrocciaio* cheering his asses on the way to the mountains. Was it in that moment I knew for the first time how weary I was of the ways of a city? I leaned eagerly over the wall to watch him who, singing now, was, as it seemed to me, making his escape. Yes, he would go by the long roads, through the cool night, perhaps by Arbia, whose waters still at dawn maybe ran red with blood. In those secret hours, unconscious of the splendour of the way, he would follow Via Francigena in the wake of many armies, till, in the nativity of the sun, Buonconvento would rise before him, within whose marvellous walls Dante's emperor, on his way southward to meet King Robert of Naples and Pope Clement v., his enemies, lingered and found his death in 1313, as it is said in the morning Mass of S.

Bartholomew. So he would go in the dawn, halting, perhaps, at the inn of the *Cavallo Inglese* for a cup of the wine they grow there, golden and cold, and a mouthful of bread ; but the heat would find him, at last, maybe under Radicofani, maybe on the barren flank of Montalcino, so that he would sleep through the terrible hours of midday, when with Sol' in Leone none may walk or work, perhaps in the shadow of the Osservanza, where you turn to the left on the steep way under the city of Montalcino. Then in the afternoon, not without a momentary prayer to Madonna Assunta of that place, whom Benedetto Bonfigli of Perugia has painted there very sweetly, he would follow the road into Val d'Orcia, past S. Antimo and its forgotten Abbey, and, crossing the river and the railway, by evening win to the lower slopes of that far-away fair mountain Mont' Amiata, where, as I seemed to remember, long and long ago a king saw Christ in the forest and was glad therefore, and for that cause built the first great Abbey of Tuscany,—ah ! long and long ago ; where, not far away even while I was a child in England, David Lazzaretti heard a voice or saw a vision, and went no more with his *baroccio* from village to



ON THE WAY TO THE MOUNTAIN

village, but wandered alone on Mont' Labbro till, pursued by dreams that he sought in vain to prove realities, the *carabinieri* shot him one day of August—it was just after the Festa of S. Maria Assunta, 1878. And to-day, too, in those immense forests what might not await one at evening, even now in the silence and the wind?

The sun had set, all that tawny barren world seemed burning in the conflagration of the ruined sun. The city flamed like some beautiful beacon. Then suddenly, out of the fire, the bells of the Duomo rang the message of the Angel. Swiftly, hysterically almost, with the eagerness of a woman, the convent of S. Girolamo answered. From Santo Spirito, from San Domenico, from San Martino, from Sant' Agostino, Santa Mustiola, from San Francesco, over the city of the Virgin the bronze voices mixed in a marvellous chorus singing Magnificat. The canticle seemed to rise towering into the sky, like the bell-shaped, pure Lily of Annunciation. From the vineyards, from the gardens, from the cornfields, from the valleys and the hills came the soft country voices, bell answering bell, throbbing and beating, wave after

wave, in an ever-widening circle of sound that broke at the feet of Siena, till at last their voices were lost in the silence that brooded over the valleys and the hills.

Again I looked out across that world, silent so suddenly, to Mont' Amiata, that in the failing light seemed infinitely far away, like a mountain in a dream. Ah, if I could reach her! There, why, there, if anywhere in the world, was all that I could desire, coolness and silence, the wind among the trees, and laughing streams bordered with forget-me-nots, and the little songs of the country, if I might trust Pio II. Why should I not set out?

One by one the cities faded in the twilight, little by little that barren world of hills was lost in an immense and beautiful shadow; out of Maremma night was coming, only Mont' Amiata, like a dim, vast precious stone, shone far away between earth and sky.

Why should I not set out?

Suddenly beneath me the olives stirred in the twilight, the corn whispered together and was silent, the dead grass on the wall, between the bricks, shivered and was still. There was a moment of profound stillness. Again the olives trembled, a swallow dipped past me cry-

ing plaintively ; beside the church the dust curled up in little tongues like flames. It was the wind at last. At first it came in little gasps, like the cries of children ; then with a flutter as of wings, like the flight of doves or the hurry of a girl's bare feet in the vineyard. Over the eastern hills the moon hung like the Host in a monstrance of jasper, the olives tossed their silver leaves as though in adoration, the corn was a sea of purple and gold,—it was the wind at last. And I heard a voice walking in the garden of the world like the voice of God.

When I looked again Mont' Amiata was lost in the night.

II

OF THE WAY AND OF THE MOUNTAIN

AS you come to Mont' Amiata from Siena, perhaps by railway through Asciano and Torrenieri to Mont' Amiata station in Val d'Orcia, perhaps by road through Buonconvento and S. Quirico, turning at last almost under the famous eyrie of Radicofani, past Bagni di S. Filippo, where Grand Duke Ferdinando II. cured his headache, up to Abbazia di San Salvatore on the verge of the woods, you will find yourself crossing the desolate and barren country of the Sienese *contado*, a tawny land of volcanic hills lined and scored by the heat of the sun, without trees or vineyards or olives, ascetic and almost naked, but that a yellow hillside here and there is sparsely covered with broom, or topped by a few stone pines, hovering there like the dreadful spirits of this country, that must always have

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Sassetta

Chantilly

S. FRANCIS'S VISION NEAR ROCCA DI CAMPIGLIA D'OREIA (*Celano ii, 93*),
MONT AMIALÀ IN THE BACKGROUND

(*Braun, Clément & Co.*)

been lonely and silent, where in some sort feudalism has lingered almost till our own time.

Very silent and strange it seems on a summer day when the impartial sun pitilessly involves this naked land in its own ecstasy of fire, and as you wind among those tortured hills you might think, indeed, that no sound could ever penetrate so great a silence, till at a turning of the way suddenly a breath of air stirs on the hillside, and you catch a sibilant murmur as of still restless but forgotten ashes, the whisper of the wind among the dry, rustling pods of the broom. It is, as it were, the voice of this desert, where at dawn, at midday, at sunset man is dwarfed by the largeness, the immensity of elemental things.

But this desolate land possesses, too, a marvellous and virile beauty beyond almost any other part of Italy. How well we have loved and understood the almost feminine loveliness of Umbria, for instance, or the laughing country about Florence, the lines of the hills there as expressive as in a picture by Sandro Botticelli. Only this we have not understood. Yet here alone we may find, if we will, something of the profound and

passionate beauty of Castile, the virility of the desert, the mystery and tyranny of the sun.

Well, it is across this country, so little appreciated or understood, so sensitive to every aspect of the sky, that every one must pass on the way from Siena to the Mountain.

If you come by railway, starting early and without lingering at Asciano, where indeed there is but little to see,—an altar piece by one of the Robbia, blue and white like a spring sky, a few second-rate Sienese pictures,—midday will find you free of the train at last, at the station of Mont' Amiata, and all the afternoon in the murmuring heat you will climb the slopes of the Mountain, winning to the woods at evening, those vast delicious forests where above you all day long the leaves are spread like a veil of green spangled with gold; and there spring might seem to be eternal. But to travel anywhere in Italy by railway is, as it were, to make compromise with beauty and with wisdom. The wise traveller will, as of old, follow the road, and since the road is Via Francigena, who would not be willing to linger by the way?

The Via Francigena, or Francesca, for it was called by either name, is, as its name

implies, the way of the Franks into Italy. Leaving Via Emilia, the ancient Æmilian Way, straight almost as a ruled line from Milan to Rimini, at Parma it crossed the Appenines by the Cisa Pass, as indeed it does to-day, descending into the western valleys at Pontremoli in Lunigiana, and entering Tuscany at Sarzana and forgotten Luni. Then by the Salto della Cervia it entered the Lucchese, passed through Lucca, and, by Altopascio and Galleno, found Val d'Arno at Fucecchio. Crossing the Arno there under S. Miniato al Tedesco, it entered the Val d'Elsa, passing Castel Fiorentino, Certaldo, and Poggibonsi. Climbing thence into the Sanese, it passed Staggia and Siena, Buonconvento, S. Quirico, Callimala, Acquapendente, Bolsena, Montefiascone, Viterbo and Sutri, entering Rome at last by Porta di Castello. By that road in 1191 came Philip Augustus; and indeed it was the shortest road from Lombardy to Rome. It was not till, in 1352, the Sienese held Radicofani that that ancient mediæval way was changed. Then the Borgo of Callimala was destroyed, and the Via Francigena, instead of holding to the valley of Paglia, was led over the height

of Radicofani, to take again the ancient way it had left for Viterbo and Rome.

It is this road you follow, starting at dawn out of Porta Romana of Siena, passing Malamerenda, where the Salimbeni slew the Tolomei in 1331, and reaching by nine in the morning Buonconvento, still with its old walls unspoiled, where—is it not so?—it is convenient to hear Mass. You may think there is but little to see in Buonconvento; a church here and there perhaps, but only one of them seems to hold any precious thing, SS. Pietro e Paolo, where, over the high altar, Matteo di Giovanni has painted Madonna, not without a certain sweetness and grace; where in the sacristy hangs a triptych by Sano di Pietro, in which he has painted Madonna in the midst with S. Catherine and S. Bernardino beside her, while not far away is a picture by Pacchiarotto: unimportant things maybe, not too worthy of remembrance, but these are the flowers of country places that you miss if you come by the iron road. And then very easily from Buonconvento you may see the convent of Monte Oliveto Maggiore, that surprising place where blind Bernardo Tolomei of Siena, recovering his sight by a miracle, in thank-

fulness forsook the world and retired to that barren hill called Accona, now so green with trees, founding there the Olivetan Congregation under the Rule of S. Benedict; and Madonna dressed his monks in white. There, where now no more you may hear the cheerful voices of those who count the world well lost, you come, not without surprise, upon the virile work of Luca Signorelli, and, beside it, really the best work of that trifler Sodoma, the integrity and energy of the dead Umbrian seeming, as by a miracle, to have saved the Sienese for once, really from himself, his self-indulgence, his facile, vulgar gorgeousness.

Or maybe the summer day will seem too fierce for you to trifle with the valleys, so that at evening, leaving Monte Oliveto unseen, and following still Via Francigena, you will leave Buonconvento for S. Quirico d'Orcia, where in the Piazza is the good Inn of Costantini Casini, where one may sleep.

As you climb into that little hill city at sunset, maybe the priests are blessing the way against to-morrow's Festa, and you are involved in the mystery in which the whole city takes part; the people, some in procession, with candles shining in the glow of earth and

sky, some with banners fantastically sewn with the initials of their Companies, the girls in white, the women and men in black, kneeling in the dust of the way, awaiting in the stillness the benediction of the evening. In that moment a certain weariness, born of the long way and the dust, seems to pass from you suddenly, so that you fall, on that night at least, into one of those dreamless sleeps that are so rare as we grow older, but that in childhood seemed to fold one every night swiftly, lovingly, into the invisible.

And then the morrow! S. Quirico d'Orcia will not hold you long; only in the dawn, maybe, you will care to see the great palace of the Chigi and the Collegiata, with its columned west doorway, its south doorway too, half Lombard, half Renaissance they tell you, its columns resting upon lions. Perhaps in that hour you will steal into the south transept before the first Mass, to see the picture of Madonna there. But the horses are waiting, and Nenno, your man, warns you of the heat and the length of the way; it is necessary to be off, where the road leads, leaving the dim Sodoma in the Misericordia unseen; no such mighty deprivation after all, perhaps, in sight of the woods and the hills.



MONT OLIVETO

At first on that wonderful road you descend into Val d'Orcia, then in the sunrise climbing slowly again, under Vignone, the cities begin to glitter about you—Castiglione d'Orcia, like a ruined fortress, on your right; Pienza, that lovely vanity; Montepulciano, like a rose on its hill, to your left: and before you, between the mountains, the scarped ruin of Radicofani soars like an eagle over the valley on the road to Rome. Midday will find you there at the Albergo under the Rocca, and evening will come again as, returning a little on your way, you climb at last, past the horrid whiteness of Bagni di S. Filippo, far beneath you, to Podere Zaccaria on the hillside of Mont' Amiata itself, to Abbazia di S. Salvatore on the verge of the woods.

Such is the way from the City to the Mountain. But in the joy and surprise of the road, one has had but little opportunity, after all, to ask oneself what Mont' Amiata really is, how it came into the power of Siena, by what means she held it, under what law. What was the *contado* of Siena, in which Mont' Amiata was the southern outpost?

It is the mistake, it might seem, of much popular criticism of our time, and of almost all

descriptive writings about Italy, to speak of the Communes as making an end of Feudalism there, to picture them not only as the fountain of a new and popular Liberty, but as continually striving to free themselves from the ghost of the Empire. However anxious we may be to thrust our own thoughts, our own manner of thinking, upon an outmoded and an alien world, no enthusiasm can excuse a mistake so profound as this; for dream though we may admit the Holy Roman Empire to have been, it was one which in the Middle Age haunted men's minds persistently, so prone are we at all times to mistake the Past for the Future. It is for this reason that no account of Mont' Amiata can be complete without some notice of its peculiarly feudal character, feudal, that is, not merely under the Abbots of S. Salvatore, the Aldobrandeschi of Santa Fiora, the Visconti of Campiglia d'Orcia, but also in its relation to the Commune of Siena; for Siena, herself a corporate feudatory of the Empire, was the suzerain of her *contado*, that region of Tuscany where possibly feudalism lingered longest, in which Mont' Amiata was undoubtedly the most feudal part.

Professor Rondoni has well said that the

Feuds and the Communes of Italy were the result, the manifestation as it were, of the same social conditions; their fundamental principles were identical, their differences merely differences of detail. The Communes were indeed neither more nor less than the great Feudatories of the Italian kingdom, and "in the eye of the law" their relation to the Emperor was the same as that of the Dukes and Margraves of Germany. He, as Lord Paramount of the World, the Keystone of the Feudal Arch, held as it were from God Himself; they were his tenants *in capite*, while the nobles of their *contadi* who submitted to their suzerainty became thereby *arrere* vassals.

It is true that within the walls of the cities Feudalism soon languished, so that as time went on the relation of the citizens with one another was often regulated by laws which were rather Latin than Teutonic; indeed, it is possible that these laws were Latin from the first. But nevertheless the relations of the cities with their dependencies remained feudal to the last.

Cut off from the open and laughing valley of the Arno, Siena reigned in the heart of Tuscany, sending her name through all the

wide region of the Maremma and of Amiata, from the mountains to the sea. In those long and deep valleys, on those barren hills, on that solitary seashore with its vast swamps breathing miasma and death, there were no great cities; the glory of Pupolonia was departed; Roselle, once so mighty, was a vision; in that mysterious land, without industry, without commerce, only small and stunted Communes could exist. But as though in a congenial soil, Feudalism took root there and flourished greatly, so that Tommasi, writing in the seventeenth century, could declare that almost to his day the Maremma of Siena was full of petty feudal chieftains, *Signorotti* he calls them, who lorded it as they would.

And truly this is no strange thing. In the open plains among great and eager cities, as in Lombardy and Val d'Arno, though Feudalism as a system of government doubtless remained, the feudal Baronage soon passed away; but it is not surprising that here in the Sanese, in the narrow valleys of Ombrone and Merse, on the mountains of Cetona and Radicofani, in the broken hills of Chianti and among the squalid villages and desolate, ruined cities of the coast,

feudal lords were able to maintain themselves for centuries. Indeed, such places might seem to have been contrived by Nature herself for those lawless chieftains, their appalling customs, their private warfare, for offence or defence; and there, too, were deer and wild boar in abundance, and poor *terrazzani* and *contadini*—how little better in their eyes—to plunder and to oppress.

Such was this country, long and long ago, which Siena was destined to covet and to conquer. And nowhere did she encounter more prolonged resistance than in Mont' Amiata, the most obstinately feudal stronghold of a pre-eminently feudal state. There, why, there was the eyrie of the Visconti of Campiglia, the great ecclesiastical feud of the Abbots of S. Salvatore, the well-nigh impregnable fortress of Santa Fiora, the capital of the Contea Aldobrandesca.

How quiet those old fierce lordships are to-day! Over the ruined fortress of the Visconti a wooden cross, crowned with an old garland, counts the innumerable hours. In the village beneath men loiter and laugh together, a mother in her doorway feeds her little son;

in the fields the maidens sing as the goats follow them home. Why, the flowers, those fragile things, have outlived the Visconti! The hope there is in that!

And the Conti Aldobrandeschi of Santa Fiora, Aldobrandino, Guglielmo, Bonifazio, and that Umberto, whom Dante met in Purgatory, what has befallen them? Whither are they gone? Can it be that a name so very glorious, so great a lordship, so potent a tyranny is forgotten out of mind? Can their earth bear grapes and not tremble lest they come? Ah, it minds them not. . . .

Last night, as I drove home to Abbazia S. Salvatore from Arcidosso, I passed, as all who go in or out must still do, under their great fortress palace, and, lo! where of old their guards sat, that devil Giovagnolo, it may be, among them, now the children were playing in the shadow, the children of those who perhaps were once their serfs. And once more I seemed to understand that hard saying: Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.

III

THE HISTORY OF ABBADIA S. SALVATORE

ABBADIA S. SALVATORE is the most ancient and the most populous of all the villages of Mont' Amiata. To-day, in any superficial view of it, a mere picturesque huddle of houses, nearly three thousand feet above the sea on the eastern flank of the highest mountain in Tuscany, its secret lies in the fact that it is an almost perfectly preserved mediæval Castello, a walled village, built beside an abbey of Benedictines. Standing as it does on the verge of those immense woods of beech and chestnut that cover the enormous cone of Mont' Amiata, from any distant view, from Radicofani for instance, it is difficult to distinguish it from the shadow of the trees, the stones and boulders that hem it in, the immense sweep of the forest that, in autumn, like a sea of fire streaming down from

the ancient crater of the mountain, breaks everywhere about it over the silent valley of the Paglia.

And its prospect is of a thousand hills and valleys. Before it, across the dumb gorge of the Paglia, Radicofani rises like a haggard boast between the valleys, bearing on its back the road to Rome; beyond, over the invisible broad valley of the upper Orcia, rises the Cetona range, with S. Casciano and Celle very visible to the right of Monte Cetona herself; and behind her, on a clear day islanded in the blue air, one may see the round tops of the Umbrian hills to far-away Subasio above Assisi and Spello, the heights over Spoleto, the mountains of Norcia; while to the left of Monte Cetona one may descry the beautiful mountains above Gubbio in the range of the central Appenines. To the north the world is bounded by the mountains of the Casentino, La Verna and the rest, but in spite of their beauty it is southward one looks oftenest, across the vast restless plain of the Patrimony, where, like a vision, like I know not what passionate and lovely thing, Monte Cimino and Monte Venere, joined indissolubly by the marvellous blue line of hills, like a bow, which marries them, rise on

the farthest horizon in a gesture of profound and exquisite beauty over the lake of Bolsena—twin pyramids of a visionary gateway of the Eternal City, for beyond lie the Campagna and Rome. And hitherward, between them, Montefiascone rises on her hills, Viterbo shines at evening like a white rose fallen on the skirts of Monte Venere.

Such is the world which all day long, visible or invisible as the heat waxes or wanes in the valleys, is spread out before that little unknown village in the mountains. And, indeed, who should seek her out in her poverty, her loneliness, and her beauty? Long and long before the summer grew so fierce the English, those wanderers, are fled away to England; while the Italians, those, at least, who seek for any respite from the accustomed heat, are not content with so lonely a place as this mountain, so humble a hostelry as Abbadia can afford them. They are for the gayer places, following the world; and what is Abbadia S. Salvatore to Vallombrosa above Val d'Arno, with its huge hotels, almost on the main line too; or Pracchia in the Appenines, where you may find all the trifling, irrepressible gaiety of a city, a little wistful, certainly, amid those towering

peaks, but comforting nevertheless to those who, having spoiled everything they could, have at last succeeded with a sort of noisy joy in smearing the mountains with their own vulgarity. But for those few among us who have loved silence and old unspoiled things, Abbadia remains almost as she used to be in the blessed, far-off days before the Italians were created by the Switzers of Piedmont, before Rome began to ape both New York and Berlin, before Florence died, before Siena had a motor omnibus, or Venice a steamboat, or Perugia an electric tram, before the whole valley of Spoleto, where Christ talked with Beata Angela of Foligno, was noisome with chemical works. So in Italy passes the glory of the world, and because of this beastliness for very shame men there cannot any longer believe in God; they are so eager to spoil His work for gold. Ah! what will they buy, I wonder, half so lovely, half so precious as that which they had for love—as that which they have ruthlessly, wantonly, stupidly destroyed?

Abbadia S. Salvatore, I said, remains almost as in the old days—almost, but not quite. It was not to be thought of. A new invasion of the Barbarians in the shape of a hard-headed

German Company has now for some years been mining in the mountains, and its headquarters are at Abbadia. The marvel is truly that so little damage has been done. The place is still a village, beautiful too, on the verge of the woods; the people, of whom the great part among the men work in the mines, live still in the old Castello; the new houses are few, and after a few days, if you would, you might forget that such things as mines exist, if it were not for the pitiful story of an old woman or the bitter, fierce words of some mother who fears for her only son.

Abbadia San Salvatore, as its name tells us, owes its origin to its monastery, the greater part of which still remains, though no longer in possession of the monks. Set on a rock, divided by a deep gorge from the Castello, the monastery looks down across the valley and plain of the Paglia to Radicofani and the far hills. Of old its abbots ruled many a town and hamlet in that restless plain or on the mountains, governing their lordship not by the might of the crozier alone, but as powerful feudal *Signori*, at whose call many a knight and vassal stood ready to take the field. "Their feudal jurisdiction," Repetti tells us in his

Dizionario, that best of all books about Tuscany, "their feudal jurisdiction stretched over many villages, hamlets and *Castelli* in the *contadi* of Chiusi, Sovana, Toscanella, Castro, Orvieto, Siena, Grosseto, Pupolonia and so forth." While so great was their wealth that, as Rondoni tells us, from the middle of the twelfth century they were able to pay to the Holy See (which declared them immediately subject to itself, without the jurisdiction of any bishop) two hundred and twenty *denari* of gold.

And then the Abbey of S. Salvatore in Mont' Amiata is perhaps the most ancient monastery of Regulars in all Tuscany. Lost though its origin is in the mists of the Longobard period, it is said to have owed its foundation to Rachis, Duke of Friuli, and king of that terrible people whom Charlemagne tamed. According to the legend current, certainly as early as the eleventh century, Rachis had vowed to build a convent in Tuscany, and while seeking a spot suitable for his purpose, heard rumours of a miracle which had befallen in Mont' Amiata. Certain shepherds (so it was said) had seen in the night, high among the branches of a great pine,

a strange light which now burned in one sole flame, and again broke starwise into three rays—obvious Symbol of the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity. At this time it seems Rachis had already assumed the cowl, and, coming in person to behold the wonder, founded there a cloister and a church, building the altar upon the spot where the mysterious tree had stood, as indeed one may see to this day. This happened (for the legend is very definite) in May 742.

Others tell a different story, and you may hear both from the peasants any July night as they gather in the corn, to wit, that Rachis beheld the divine manifestation while he was besieging Perugia; the Saviour appearing to him between two burning torches. It is perhaps worthy of note that Francesco di San Casino, the seventeenth-century painter of the fresco in the eastern chapel of the south transept in the Abbey church, appears to have known and to have remembered both versions of the legend, since he has painted the king and the queen, with their courtiers, gazing upward at a clump of seven trees—or is it one tree with seven trunks?—in the midst of which Christ appears surrounded by a pale starlike radiance.

Nor does the legend end here, for it tells further how that Erminia, Rachis' queen, later took the veil in Mont' Amiata, together with her daughter, and thereafter founded a new convent at a place called Ermeta. There Erminia died, and there she was buried ; and the good Gigli does not forget to tell us that in his day certain hermits still dwelt there. The place is now marked by an old church and a cross, and thither the people of Abbadia make pilgrimage barefoot.

Whatever may be the true origin of S. Salvatore, it is certain that from the days of the Carlovingians, Popes and Emperors vied with one another in conferring privileges upon the monks. The earliest among the Imperial grants is one of Lewis the Pious in 816, and it is followed by those of Lothair I., of Otho I., of Otho III., of Henry the Saint, and of Conrad the Salic. From these we may gather certain facts about the Abbey. Otho III., for instance, in 996 granted the monks numerous villages, oratories, churches, and monasteries, to the end, as he said, that they might live and pray God night and day for the stability of the empire. And from the same diploma we learn that the territories of the

Abbey were conterminous with, and surrounded by, the feuds of the Aldobrandeschi, and by those of the Visconti of Campiglia d'Orcia ; a neighbourhood which laid them open to perpetual spoliation and invasion. Indeed, to such a pass did these lawless barons carry their aggressions, that in 1037 the monks protested, with tears, that by reason of hunger and nakedness they were unable to serve God. The Emperor Henry II. thereupon took the monastery under his special protection, conferred upon it new territories in addition to the old ones, and decreed that henceforward no duke, marquis, count or viscount should dare to do it wrong, or beat or oppress its dependants. Henry VI. confirmed this privilege, reserving to himself the right of *fodrum*, but he again increased their possessions, and recognised the jurisdiction of the Abbot of S. Salvatore over Pian Castagnajo, Radicofani, and Montelaterone. In the thirteenth century Otho III. and Frederick II. showed themselves equally anxious to afford the Abbey favour and protection.

Under such powerful patronage and protection the monastery increased, as one might suppose, in wealth and prosperity ; but with

riches and security, as it might seem, came idleness and worse, till the monks not only grew careless of their religious duties but even neglected their temporal affairs. At last, Pope and Emperor alike despairing of their amendment, the Benedictines were expelled from S. Salvatore in February 1228, and their place filled by the Cistercians, in whose hands the Abbey remained until its suppression by the Grand Duke Pietro Leopoldo in 1782.

Meanwhile, on the hill over the narrow but steep gorge which to-day on one side divides the Abbey from the village of Abbadia S. Salvatore, the Castello, literally a walled village, had risen. And this was its origin. From the sixth to the eleventh century the need of protection for life and limb was, with the mass of the people, far more urgent than the desire for liberty. The expedients they adopted to win this safety were various and numerous. All of them, however, agreed in a voluntary submission, more or less complete, to some powerful protector. In those days, and perhaps now too, the Church offered the only asylum to the destitute and oppressed, and many preferred to seek the protection of a monastery rather than to serve a feudal lord.

Indeed, the classes known as *Oblati* and *Donati* existed principally, if not entirely, among the dependants of the Church. Some of them gave themselves and all their goods to a convent, promising obedience to the abbot, and asking in return nothing but food and clothing; thus constituting a new Order distinguished by its duties and dress. Others entirely renounced their freedom, and gave themselves and their descendants into perpetual servitude; while others, again, retained their personal liberty, and merely undertook to pay an annual tribute. The rites and ceremonies which went with these transactions were as singular as the principles from which they sprang. Sometimes the *Oblati* prostrated themselves upon the ground, offering the sum of four *denari* in token of the servitude which they then assumed. Sometimes they bound themselves with the rope of the church bell. Ducange and Mabillon describe these rites and many more. And, indeed, the annals of the Benedictines contain vast numbers of such contracts, together with the formalities observed by the parties to them. Among them are to be found many instances of free men assuming the quality of *Glebæ adscripti*, and submitting

to conditions more or less oppressive according to their necessity. It is often difficult to distinguish between the *Oblati*, the *Servi*, and the *Rustici*. But this much seems certain, that the dependants of the monasteries, by whatever name they were called, formed one of the principal sources of the wealth of the monks.

The inhabitants of the *Castello* of Abbazia S. Salvatore were thus originally the dependants and serfs of the monks; they performed all the labours of the monastery in the kitchen and on the land. They owed to the abbot feudal duty, feudal labour, feudal payment. The *Missi*, those sent officially by the monastery, might gather what grapes they chose for the monks when they went through the vineyards—and there were grapes, though poor ones, in the valley of the Paglia and toward Acquapendente—and from the hunter they exacted the head and feet of the wild boar, the shoulder of the deer. Those who were rich enough to provide six horses for the service of the monastery were exempt from the tithe of bread and wine (*decime panis et vini*), but all were in a state of greater or less dependence, and all, or nearly all, paid rent.

Their lot, however, was gradually amelior-

ated, as we may see from a document published by Professor Zdekauer. For in 1212, during the rule of Abbot Rolland, *Rollandus, Abbas Sancti Salvatoris*, on the petition of Petacio and Merisio, consuls of the Castello (*Castri Abbatie Consules*), they were finally granted certain rights: as, the right to elect consuls, a practice which had grown up surreptitiously; the right of the son, the grandson and the nephew to inherit all the wealth of the father, grandfather, and uncle, and *vice versa*, not merely by the goodwill of the Abbot, but of right; the right to make a money payment in place of feudal labour. Thus, as Rondoni reminds us, three years before the English Barons won their rights at Runnymede these mountain serfs had also demanded and obtained their Magna Charta. The triumph was all the greater because both Pope and Emperor had always favoured the Abbots, and protested against the pretences of the subject villages to elect officers, to obtain Statutes, and to deny the Abbots their tithes. But the population of the Castello had increased, and from the end of the twelfth century many of the Communes of Mont' Amiata had continued the struggle for liberty in spite of

Imperial diplomas and Papal excommunications. In January 1236 we find the men of the Castel della Badia S. Salvatore electing for Podestà Raineri di Stefano of Orvieto without consulting the Abbot, so that on February 16 Pope Gregory ix. issued a Bull against the two Communes of Castel della Badia and Montelaterone, because they refused the accustomed services to the Abbey. On February 29 the Abbadinghi were excommunicated; and so the struggle went on until, some half a century later, in 1288, we find the people of Abbazia S. Salvatore affirming the independence of the Castello and making their Statute without the leave of the Abbot.

Dry and arid as the details must appear to any one not already interested in such things, it is not without a certain emotion one reads them in Abbazia itself. For the Castello is—as it has always been—a walled village, filled to overflowing with a delightful but somewhat fierce mountain-folk; possessed of all the kindness of such people, and independent, too, beyond any other Italians I ever met. In thinking of their struggle for independence it is not unworthy of notice that they began to be successful when the Benedictines were

expelled and the Cistercians entered into that inheritance. Was it, after all, because the Benedictines were too lenient that they were expelled, or that, with the advent of new masters, the Abbadinghi, ever suspicious of strangers, began to assert themselves? The cause of the sudden decay of energy among the Benedictines is hidden from us; but it is interesting, and perhaps instructive, to note that it was in the middle of the twelfth century, some two generations before that expulsion, that Siena and Orvieto began to covet the Mountain, and not least the great ecclesiastical feud of Abbadia S. Salvatore. The Communes were born; a new link was about to be forged into the feudal chain, displacing the Abbots and Barons, who henceforth would claim no longer directly, but through the Communes, from the Emperor or the Church.

Siena, by that time the strongest and most beautiful city in Southern Tuscany, lay some forty miles to the north, Orvieto lay nearly twenty-five miles to the south-west, and like a stronghold between them rose the Mountain, divided into feuds of Church and Empire.

Among the ancient fiefs of the Abbots, as I have said, was the fortress of Radicofani, the

most striking feature in any view from Abbadia itself, standing on a hill 3000 feet above the sea over the road to Rome, whether that road, Via Francigena, ran through the Castello of Radicofani as it does to-day, or, as in very ancient times, through the valley of the Paglia and the Borgo of Callimala. The monks, however, did not exclusively possess this strong place, but it was the taking of it which brought the Sienese into the domain of the monastery. For in 1138, in the parliament of the Sienese people assembled before the Church of S. Cristoforo, the Count Manente granted to Rainerio, Bishop of Siena, a sixth part of Radicofani and its mountain. Under cover of this transaction the Sienese made more than one attempt to possess themselves of the place, and in 1145, the army of the Commune being in Mont' Amiata, *in sul piano dell' Abbadia*, compelled the Abbot to swear neither to avenge himself for the injuries which he had suffered at their hands, nor to seek compensation for them. Further, he undertook to save and defend the inhabitants of Siena, together with their possessions, to hold in Radicofani, in the name of the Commune, that part thereof which belonged to the Sienese,

and to give them free access thereto, so that in case of war they might be able to use the place against any one save the Abbot and his monks. Thus the Communes dealt with the nobles, and it is interesting to see that they had as little respect for an ecclesiastical as for a lay feud.

In 1153, however, one half of the Castello of Radicofani was ceded to Pope Eugenius III. for an annual *census* of six silver marks, as Repetti tells us. In 1198 the Commune of Orvieto comes on the scene, assuming the defence and protection of the monastery, the monks undertaking to pay them twenty *soldi* yearly; while five years later, Abbot Roland promised *de consilio totius nostri Collegii* to pay a further sum of thirty *soldi* of Sienese money by way of rent for all the possessions of the Church of S. Salvatore, and to make peace and war at the command of the Commune with all save the Pope and Emperor and their successors. In return the Consuls of Orvieto bound themselves to aid and defend the Abbot and his successors, their towers and possessions, as citizens and subjects of the Commune. Thenceforward, for nearly a century and a half, Orvieto succeeded in

maintaining her hold upon Abbazia S. Salvatore; and the removal of the Benedictines, in 1229, to make way for the Cistercians in no way affected her position. Indeed, at that time we find the Pope recommending the monastery and its wealth to their protection; while in 1232 the Commune condemned the Abbot in forty lire of Sienese money because he refused to make war against Siena at their command. Siena, however, even at the lowest ebb of her fortunes refused to abandon her claims in Mont' Amiata. Indeed, in 1264, during the Ghibelline ascendancy, which followed the battle of Montepertoso, she compelled the monks to acknowledge her suzerainty; but the Orvietans soon re-established their authority, and it was not until 1347 that Abbazia S. Salvatore finally became part of the Sienese dominion.

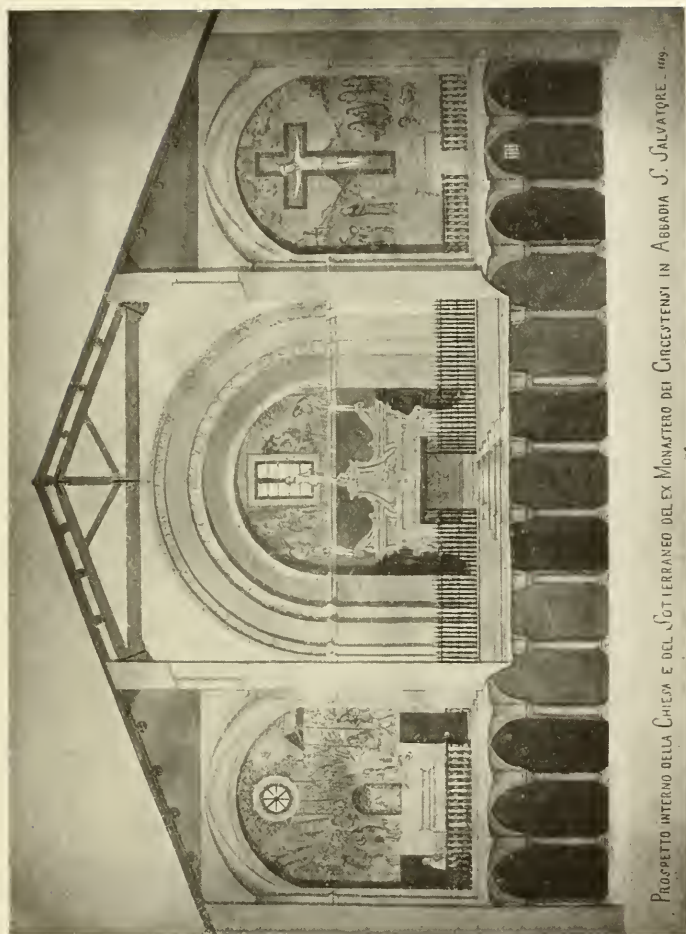
The political vicissitudes of the Abbey may seem, indeed, of but little importance, since the main interest of the history of Mont' Amiata lies in the long struggle of the rural Communes for liberty and rights. Isolated as they were, and practically without other assistance from the fourth century onwards, they fought their way to freedom. Here in Abbazia the

authority of the Abbots was consistently upheld by Popes and Emperors ; yet in spite of Imperial privileges and Papal excommunications the rebellion against feudal tyranny continued from generation to generation, until, as we have seen, the right to frame Statutes and to elect officials was reluctantly conceded.

Such is the story of this Abbey, half fortress, half monastery, on the verge of the chestnut woods, 3000 feet above the sea, on the eastern flank of Mont' Amiata. And if after many weeks in such a place one dares to ask oneself, Are the people happier, stronger, better, to-day now that there are no more any monks in the Mountain, and the Abbey is falling into ruin, and a German Company, mining for quicksilver, works almost the whole male population in gangs of two hundred and fifty at a time, eight hours each day, by day and night, Sundays and weekdays alike, under the earth in the dark? one is compelled to answer, No ; or at least, if you have the misfortune to be anti-clerical, to shake the head in doubt. It is most strange at night to see the procession of miners, in any real way (though there be nothing good or bad but thinking makes it so) not less serfs than their ancestors,

flocking back from the mines to their Castello, that walled village of the eleventh century, where the Oblates of the Benedictine Order lived and worked, well, at least, in the good sun. And I who have seen here so many strong men fed like little children by their mothers, their wives, their daughters, because of the terrible trembling that mercury poisoning brings to us, can find in my heart only hatred of those alien barbarian money-makers, who, unlike the monks, have no care at all either for the bodies or for the souls of those who serve them.¹

¹ As this book is passing through the press, I learn that my friend, Dr. Giglioli of Florence, has been up to the Abbazia S. Salvatore, to try to set this matter right by establishing baths for the miners and explaining to them the necessity in their employment of daily bathing. It is to be hoped this will have some effect on the health of the people.



PROSPETTO INTERNO DELLA CHIESA E DEL SOTTERRANEO DEL MONASTERO DEI CIRCESTENSI IN ABBADIA S. SALVATORE - 1119.

PLAN OF THE PRESENT AND SUBTERRANEAN CHURCHES OF THE ABBEY OF
S. SALVATORE

IV

THE BADIA

PIO II. in that rare book of *Commentarii*, one of the most living and delightful books of the early Renaissance, describes Abbadia S. Salvatore, very happily and, as it might seem, not without enthusiasm. Fleeing from the heat of Rome, his eyes ever turned towards his beloved Siena, he came to the Mountain in the summer of 1462, living in the monastery, and passing the days for the most part under the chestnut trees, where he received ambassadors and composed his Bulls. To-day a stone monument marks the place where the great tree stood in whose shadow he held his court; it bears the following inscription:—

PIVS II.
PONT. MAX.
AESTIVOS VRBIS
FVGIENS ARDORES
CASTANEARVM
VMBRA ALLECTVS
HIC CONSTITVTIO
NES FACIEBAT ET
LEGATOS AVDIEBAT
AD 1463

That he loved the place who can doubt? "This place," he writes, speaking of Abbadia, "is in Mont' Amiata, and to none of the *Castelli* of this most pleasant Mountain does it yield in amenity. Looking eastward, and, as one might say, equally distant from the summit of Mont' Amiata and from the river of the Paglia, it is set on a little plain almost a mile round about, filled with great chestnut trees and closed by bitter rocks and the great precipices over the valley. There even of old was set the Castello, defended on the one side by the cliffs and rocks, and on the other by great walls and a ditch through which run the living waters of the Mountain plentiful and copious. The plain before the Castello is brought into culture, the greater part of it being garden, the rest fields. And here, too, is that Abbey, built of old, provided with proper dwellings. There live the Bishop and six Cardinals. . . ."

To-day the Abbey which Pio II. in the fifteenth century found so fair is almost a ruin; the monks are gone, the treasury has been rifled, the library carried to Florence; and this is the work not of the universal robber and vandal United Italy, but of Pietro Leopoldo, who, coming to the place in 1782, was

welcomed eagerly by the monks and the people. And when he came into the monastery he found there set out for his delight, to do him honour, all the ancient plate and wealth of the Abbey. Whether it was then the thought came to him, or whether it had already been born in his heart, I know not ; but, when he went away, the monks, thinking they still had his favour, asked to be allowed to quarter the Grand Ducal arms with theirs. His answer was, he would send them word from Florence. Then from Florence he sent a representative bidding the people ask of him what they would, for he intended to suppress the monastery ; but they were only afraid and bewildered, and instead of asking a great thing, besought of him three priests to say Mass for them ; nor would they be persuaded to accept any other gift, though it was explained to them that they might have their priests for nothing. Such is the simplicity of folk who, having been robbed, think only ever after of their most priceless possession. Nor are they much changed in spite of United Italy, and the long-haired Socialists who win both the laughter and applause of these children in the little Piazza in the Castello. Not so long ago, one

early spring, many of them were starving, or almost starving, for the snow fades but slowly in that endless forest, and food is at best hard to come by. So the Syndic, good man, prepared to devote the money usually paid for a lenten preacher to the relief of the poor. But it was not to be. The very poor who were to be relieved, starving as they were, raised an insurrection, and insisted on having their usual Predicatore.

The days when, as Pio II. tells us, the Abbey welcomed a Pope, a Bishop, and six Cardinals were over. Gherardini, however, in the *Visita dello Stato*, asserts that in 1676 there lived in the Abbey nine *Sacerdoti*, three *Professi*, two *Laici*, and that it possessed an income of three hundred *scudi* a year. To-day everything but the church is a ruin. The monastery, picturesque enough still, is divided among the school-children, certain *contadini*, and pigs, asses, goats, and dirt.

As you come from Mont' Amiata station, or from Radicofani, almost the first house you must pass on coming in to Abbadia is the Abbey itself, its great gateway, fifty yards from the church, opening on the road itself which passes outside the village, and on and on round the

whole Mountain at an average height of more than 2000 feet. Entering that gateway, and following the stony road towards the church, you come upon a kind of lodge, a great archway, the second gate of the monastery, where to right and left is a door, and over them the old inscriptions. On the one side was the office for the affairs of second instance, and on the other for the affairs of widows and infants. Tommasi tells us, under the year 1462, that in criminal affairs Abbazia was in the jurisdiction of the *capitano di giustizia* of Radicofani, and for *civile e misto* there resided in Abbazia a *Podestà nobile Sanese*, who began his office in the kalends of July for a year, receiving 1016 lire in pay, but he was obliged to pay *per le spedizioni* 272 lire, and to maintain a *notaio* that the *auditor generale di Piano* assigned to him. The jurisdiction of the Podestà extended *alla Paglia e Legna*; but it was only one of first instance, because the court of second instance remained to the Abbot, as did the causes of widows and infants, and these he judged privately.

The church itself, which stands to the east of the second gate, is even to-day, full as it is of all the tawdriness of the seventeenth and

eighteenth centuries, a very beautiful building. In plan cruciform with a shallow apse, the nave is spanned by three great round arches, each smaller than the one westward of it. The transepts form chapels, and now along the nave tawdry altars are placed, over which are frescoes of the seventeenth century, only one of which can have any interest for us. It is that over the first altar to the left. There some seventeenth-century painter, probably Casinus, though Tommasi calls him Cav. Guiseppi Nasini, has repainted a fresco of the presentation to the monks of models of the Abbey by Rachis. Certain of these models are said to be still in Abbazia, while one, I was told, was in Florence, but I have not been able to find them.

The transept and the chancel of the church are guarded by a beautiful iron railing, and it is in the chapels of the transepts, and more especially in the south chapel, that any interest we may still find in the church lies. There over the altar is the Crucifix, carved out of the great chestnut or pine in which Rachis or another saw the vision of our Lord. Carved by some local artist in the thirteenth century, when the tree which grew on this very spot,

and whose roots still moulder in the earth, under the lower church, was cut down, it is not without a certain homely beauty ; and still, as they say, works miracles, for in their troubles, in drought or great snow, for instance, they uncover it, and, as I know, not without hope of comfort. Under the altar is a fresco older than the rest, of Christ in the tomb of Joseph, surrounded by *angiolini*. On the right wall Casino has painted Rachis hunting about Chiusi, where he hears the rumour of the vision ; on the left, he, with his queen and courtiers, sees the very Christ Himself in the early morning light, like a wonderful star shining in a group of seven pines, on the little hill on which the Abbey now stands ; and this fresco Casino has signed *Franciscus S. Casinus*.

These frescoes, like those in the chapel of the north transept, doubtless replaced older ones, faded perhaps, or spoiled with candle smoke, when in the seventeenth century the church was restored. To-day in that north chapel there remains nothing, or almost nothing, of interest, a Madonna and Child, a miracle picture over the altar, by some late painter of the seicento, a fresco of the Presentation of the Virgin, and another of the Visitation.

In his *Italia Sacra*, Ughelli gives a long list of the relics which in his day were treasured in the Abbey church. Among the rest were—a piece of the True Cross, part of the *Sudario* which covered the face of our Lord, part of the sheet in which His Body was wrapped, part of the stone which stood before His Sepulchre, part of the sponge which the soldiers offered Him filled with vinegar when He said “I thirst,” part of His *Presepio*, part of the rock on which He stood at the time of His Transfiguration, part of the rock whereon He sat when He fed the five thousand in the wilderness, part of the stone on which He stood when He preached the Sermon on the Mount; the marvellous Bible which S. Gregory wished to see, and which is said to have contained a plan of the Temple of Solomon. Thus the treasures of the monastery were in keeping with its name, St. Saviour; but of these I think not one remains. Among countless Relics given to the Abbey in 1036, on the occasion of its consecration, the most venerated, and perhaps the most curious, seems to be the head of Pope Marcus. This strange possession is enclosed in a bronze reliquary, cast in the likeness of the Pope; it seems to be a work

of the fourteenth century, is certainly Tuscan, and may be from the hand of some local founder.

All the interest that a place so spoiled by restoration still possesses is not, however, confined to the church we know as S. Salvatore. For the good priest, if you are friends with him, and he is a black Catholic, not partial to heretics, will lead you out again into the courtyard, and, descending a long flight of steps, open a door under the southern transept of the present church, when suddenly you will find yourself on the threshold of a lower church, subterranean now, and perhaps always, which lies under the transept and choir of the upper church, which faces really north and south. No light penetrates into this immense dark and damp vault, but with the light of tapers it is possible to examine it without too much discomfort. It seems to have been used as a burial place for all the people of the Castello. In this corner and in that, vast heaps of bones still remain, while here a skull horribly grins at you, there amid a heap of dust great thigh bones lie, disorderly, heaped there by the government. This lower church is much older than the upper sanctuary. It is upheld by nearly thirty pillars, many of them exqui-

sitely beautiful, of the best Lombard work; and the capitals are carved variously, here you may see the heads of bulls, there men and horses. Sometimes the shafts, too, are carved with a waving pattern; and close to the door is one on which a great bishop's cross seems to lie as though embedded in the stone. Immediately under the chapel of the Crucifix, in the upper church, is the root of the old tree, they tell you, in which Christ appeared in a vision to Rachis.

No one visits this forgotten sanctuary now, yet it is far better worth seeing than most subterranean churches, nor can I find any account of it in any book. The people of Abbadia know nothing of it, and the parish priest, with the best will in the world, knows nothing either. Whether this was the first church built by the monks, perhaps for security in that lonely place, almost under the ground, and abandoned later for a more splendid building above it on the hillside, or whether it is all that remains of a once splendid building consisting of an upper and a lower sanctuary, I know not. It might seem that here is a subject worthy of the zeal of some archæologist who will search the archives of Florence and Siena.



THE CASTELLO, ABBADIA S. SALVATORE

V

THE CASTELLO

AS you pass the Castello, the walled village of Abbadia S. Salvatore to-day, on your way to Pian Castagnajo for instance, by the new road that, as I have said, girdles the whole Mountain, you might think it a mere disordered huddle of houses, a sort of encampment partly left from the Middle Age, partly the hurried, scamped work of our own time, just a warren in which such poor people as miners must expect to live almost everywhere, and certainly in so poor a land as Italy. But on closer acquaintance you find that the Castello remains almost exactly as it has been for centuries—since the sixteenth century certainly—with many a quarter dating really from the Middle Age, practically the same walled village as that in which of old the *Donati* and *Oblati* of the monastery used to live, in which their

children so quickly won their freedom, "three years before the English Barons obtained their rights at Runnymede," as Rondoni is so eager to remind us. And, indeed, save perhaps Castello di S. Eraclio on the Via Flaminia, not far from Foligno, it would be hard to find a more perfect example of the mediæval Castello; and then Abbazia S. Salvatore, unlike Castello di S. Eraclio, is the Castello of a monastery. In those far-off days, when the monastery stood alone, the monks no doubt invited the people to come and live near them, to place themselves under their protection, really for the safety of the monastery; and indeed the place is still very solitary and remote. The best idea of this walled village and of its relation to the Abbey may be had from the Madonna delle Grazie, a little desecrated church used now as a granary, to the eastward of Abbazia. One reaches it by a somewhat steep and winding road, that leaves the highway on the left just after the Abbey gate is passed, before coming to the Castello. Following this path, and passing under the walls of the village, you see about a quarter of a mile away on the hillside Madonna delle Grazie, and looking back thence the monastery

and the Abbey stand before you on their two hills, separated by the gorge you have skirted on your way ; the Abbey ringed about with woods, the Castello a picturesque hummock of houses climbing up to the Castellina, strongly walled, crouching over the valley.

This village, so out of the world, as we might say, for indeed the whole world seems to lie at its feet, so pathetic in its isolated littleness, yet modelled itself on the great cities of Italy. Like them, Castello dell' Abbadia di S. Salvatore was divided into two parts, the original Castello and the Borgo, and these, later, were separated into three regions, *terzieri* ; the first called Borgo Maggiore, the second Corso dei Fabbi, the third S. Angelo, because of a church that once stood in that part. Then the Castello proper had four gates : to wit, Porta dell' Abbadia, with its beautiful loggia, which looks towards the Abbey ; Porta del Cassaro, which looks westward, and opens on the Corso Vittorio Emanuele, the road to Pian Castagnajo ; Porta Nuova, which looks eastward towards Radicofani ; and Porta della Porticciola, which leads down a long flight of steps into the Borgo. The Borgo itself has two gates : Porta del Borgo, which opens on Corso Vittorio

Emanuele, and Porta Mulina, from which the old mediæval road to Radicofani begins.

Entering the Porta dell' Abbadia, from which the two chief ways of the Castello Via di Mezzo and the Corso begin, following the latter, narrow and dark enough, and lined with mediæval houses, you soon come into Piazza di S. Croce, the chief Piazza of the place, closed on one side by the old Palazzo del Podestà and on the other by the parish church of S. Croce. S. Croce is a large building of the Middle Age, restored almost out of all recognition. And though it be the parish church, and for all it is so large, "one was buried," Tommasi tells us, "in the Badia: for that is the principal." There is another church in the Borgo, an Oratory dedicated to S. Leonardo. That, too, was under the patronage of and served by the Cistercians. These were the only churches in the Castello and Borgo, but within the walls were established of old the Laic Companies of the SS. Sacramento, S. Sebastiano, S. Michele Arcangiolo, S. Maria con Cappa, and the Congregation of the Rosary. Every trace of these seems to have vanished, save that over the door of a great house in Via S. Maria, a street that turns out

of the Corso to climb up to the Castellina, just within Porta dell' Abbadia, you may still find the name of the Company in great Roman letters—Santa Maria ; and there, as I suppose, was the Hospice of the Congregation. There are still Laic Companies among the people, however, but not the old ones. The Company of S. Marco Papa, protector of the Castello, founded in the end of the eighteenth century, apparently after the suppression of the monastery, numbers more than four hundred members ; and the Company of the Sacre Cuore, that strange modern extravagance, full of the usual bad taste which the Jesuits inherited from their Spanish founders, and which has not grown less in the centuries, enrols all the children.

In the maze of narrow, airless streets, so filthy that some twenty-five out of every hundred children born die in their first years, it is easy to lose one's way altogether, and, indeed, it is only perhaps the seeing eye that will find anything of interest in a place so poor that has been left so much to itself. And yet just there, it might seem, lies its value for us who pass by. Why, if you will but see it, there is not a vista that is not beautiful, not a single dilapidated, outside stairway that does not "make a picture."

You wander down to Porta Nuova, and suddenly, as you go, the old gate under its tower frames the bizarre rock and broken fort of Radicofani for you, a marvellously strange, fantastic thing, full of pride, fierceness, and scorn. And then, great people have lived here: Visconti of Campiglia in Via S. Angelo, the Conti Cervini of Vivo, too, in the same street,—their stag, pierced with nine arrows, is still set over the door; but almost every other house bears a coat, and the houses of the old families of the Sanese, Carli, Fracasini, Cervini, remain filled now with the poor and their cattle, the pigs inhabiting the ground floor—where also the grain may be stored, or the wine of the valley of Paglia—the people themselves the first, and the goats the second—you may hear them patter up the stairway at nightfall any evening in Abbadia, led by a little maid singing.

Not far from the Malatesta houses is Via Malatesta, a turning to the right out of Via Vincenzo Pinelli, which itself, in this maze of byways, leads from Piazza S. Croce to Porta Porticciola. Passing along Via Malatesta, you come at last into Piazza del Mercato, the second Piazza of the Castello, with its dilapidated, picturesque porticoes and strange old houses,

and coming out of it, in a moment you find yourself at Porta Cassaro, where, to the left, is an old stairway, and, over a house close by, the *stemma* of the Malatesta.

It is not, however, in the Castello or the Borgo alone that the interest, such as it is, of Abbazia S. Salvatore lies. Within the walls, as I have said, there were but two churches, or three at most ; for of old, doubtless, S. Angelo stood there where Via Filippo Neri turns out of Via di S. Angelo, where a great building, possibly in part the old church, stands to this day.

Tommasi tells us in his fifth book that in the *Corte*, that is to say the territory of Abbazia, there were many oratories and chapels. The Oratory of Madonna del Castagno, for instance, "very ornate and spacious," on the verge of the woods, on the road to the Ermeta ; the Romitorio, called the Ermeta, itself dedicated to S. Cecilia, hidden in the woods, built, as the people say, by Queen Erminia, and maintained by the monks, of which Pio II., following popular tradition, speaks in his Commentaries. And then there still stand, too, the Oratory of Madonna delle Remedie on the road to Pian Castagnajo, just beyond the Torrent ; the Oratory of St. Roch, spoiled now and turned

into a Casa Colonica, just opposite the Porta Cassaro in the country ; the Oratory della Madonna delle Grazie nel Poggio del Colle, which we have seen ; the Pieve de' SS. Jacomo and Cristofano, called *intrafossata*, spoiled and desecrated, in the fields towards Podere Zaccaria, and the forbidden Oratories of Madonna a Capo at Ponte di S. Andrea, a mere heap of ruins now, and S. Maria Maddalena, which is perhaps the best of all. For the Oratory of S. Maria Maddalena, set as it is just within the woods, on a little hill on the right, above the road to Pian Castagnajo, where it first turns westward, less than a quarter of a mile from the village, is just a natural grotto, formed by the volcano when spuing out the enormous rocks, many tons in weight, that everywhere lie scattered among the trees on the Mountain. Just these stones fell in the form of a house, one upon another, and a greater fell before them, leaving a little space as though for a door. In the thirteenth century, if not before, the people, as it might seem, finding this sanctuary, covered it within, and without too, with frescoes, and it is the remains of these, altogether spoiled though they are to-day, that lends the place its interest.

How little, after all, these facts, acquired with so much labour, for love too, avail. They are just dead things, and are as useless to us, yes, and almost as pathetically futile, as the ashes of a friend—a friend who has fled away for ever. As I sit writing down all these little fragments of a broken truth and reality that has faded away, I begin to realise, perhaps for the first time, how useless and how absurd such work must ever be. Then I look out of my window over the endless chestnut woods, flaming gold now, like a huge burning plain, rising here and there in great golden stairs to the summit, bare, and almost blue or silver, and, as often at sunset, capped with a rosy cloud. The whole world from here is fantastic, and very silent and beautiful. Suddenly up the road a little girl comes singing, still a long way off, leading a great white ox home to the stable after the labour of the day. She is knitting too, and her eyes are bent on her work ; slowly she comes, singing to herself, the cord, caught over the great horns, looped on her arm.

The song falls silent, a difficult stitch interrupts the melody, then she pulls sweetly at the great patient bullock and speaks to him softly. As she goes on her way past the house,

about to sing again, suddenly she looks up and sees me. She stops half shyly, and the bullock, slowly plodding behind her, lowers his head, his great horns encircle her just below the hips, as though to protect her.

"Sing for me again, Madonnina," I say. "Surely you have the best voice in all Abbadia." But she shakes her head shyly. "Felicissima notte, Signore," she says, as she passes me. And I, watching her go, presently hear her voice again sweetly through the twilight on the road to the village. Ah, what beside that simple moment of life are the dead facts of all the centuries?



HOMEWARDS
ABBADIA S. SALVATORE



VI

IN THE FOREST AND ON THE MOUNTAIN

THE heat is wonderful. It is not heavy, as any great heat in England always is, but vehement and marvellous, with all the fierceness and vitality of fire, the pride and beauty of the sun. Slowly, slowly, the delicate shadows creep through the vineyards the wind has died in the woods; in the hushed fields the corn seems about to burst into flame.

For three days now the Crucifix in the Abbey has been uncovered, and the whole village seems to be there all day praying for rain; a strange, a marvellous sight. And the days are not more wonderful than the nights. Each day is like a hard, bright, precious stone, more dazzling and more heartless than a diamond. Everything is still. And the nights are like sapphires. The sun delights and frightens me; it is wonderful, and a little mysterious. Now

that they have uncovered the Crucifix it is as though some strange Presence had suddenly come into our midst.

One evening, not long before sunset, as I lay after the heat of the day just within the forest, not far from a little stream that, in spite of the drought, still ran secretly under the trees among the stones out into the parched valley, suddenly a *cicala* began to sing its endless song, that song which in the olive gardens of Val d'Arno, or among the cypresses of Mugello, so soon grows to be a burden, which only a few weeks before had driven me up into the mountains in search of quietness and silence. And now I found myself listening intently to its dry complaint ; it was so rare a thing in this high place. Just then a figure, not old, but already a little worn by the wind of the Mountain, came towards me along the path beside the stream ; and as he was about to pass by he stopped and listened too, giving me greeting—

“ Buona sera, Signoria.”

He was a man of some fifty years, something a little better than a peasant, dressed in the worn, mean clothes of the countrymen all over Central Italy, and in his hand he carried a long,

untrimmed staff lately cut from the brushwood of the chestnuts. But it was his eyes which first caught me, surprising me by their swiftness and their laughter. Every now and then, as he listened, he shook back from his forehead the great untidy locks of hair, already a little grey, that tumbled about his head under his great soft hat. Presently he spoke to me again—

“Senta, Signoria,” he said, waving his hand towards the trees where the *cicala* was singing, “Senta, Signoria, even the Saints cannot escape the importunity of the barren woman.”

“What is your name?” I said, smiling at him. “And what have the gods to do with the *cicale*, they always seemed to me to belong to quite Other People.”

“And the Signore is right. Ah, be sure.” He stood still, listening again. Then, as I made room in the shadow beside me, he came towards me.

“I am the President of the Mountain,” he said, “and my name is Ser Giovanni. I know the Mountain as no one has ever known it. . . . If the Signore should wish to go to the *Cima*, now that the nights are warm and the sunrise like the eyes of a little child . . .? Ah, how often have I seen the Signore in the high

places, once in the Plain of the Lilies and once under the Cross of Baldassare . . . reading reading, always reading. Sometimes I followed him a long way off, lest harm should come. Am I not President of the Mountain?"

"So you know all the paths on the Mountain?" I asked.

"Who knows them if not I? Even the monks, whom the Duke sent away to please the Austrians, did not know the Mountain as I do." He laughed softly to himself.

"Well," I said, laughing too, "we will see."

There was silence. The little stream ran sweetly on its way, the wind stirred softly among the parched leaves. Suddenly, close at hand, the *cicala* began again its endless song.

"The Signore hears? It is the song of the *cicala*."

"Tell me now," said I, "why the Saints cannot escape the complaint of the barren woman?"

"Signoria, who may escape it? Ah, certainly not the Saints. Will the Signore hear a tale, a little tale, an old little tale of a grandmother?"

"Tell me."

"There was a barren woman who said

always, kneeling to Maria Santissima: 'Is it truly then my destiny that I should not have children? But make me then the Grace, Madonna mia . . . make me then to become a mother.' Signore, her prayer was heard, so that a little later she brought forth—a *cicala*. . . . After a time she picked it up from the earth, and holding it between the palms of her hands, and looking at it half-crazy, half-stupefied, she exclaimed at last: 'What should I do with this?' and she flung it under the bed.

"One day she had to carry the food to her husband on the Mountain, for he was a charcoal burner; but she did not wish to go. It was not that her burden was heavy, for she took an ass to carry the knapsack. No, she had only to guide the ass. Nevertheless continually she told herself, 'Ah, if only I had a son he would spare me this fatigue.' Suddenly she heard a subtle, low voice from under the bed: 'Mother, it is I who will go with the ass.' And out came the little *cicala* jumping like a grasshopper. 'We shall see what you can do,' his mother replied. Then she placed the knapsack on the crupper, the *cicala* gave a jump and entered into the ass's ear, and off they went.

"The Signore may believe me that whoever met the ass that day, seeing him alone without a rider, beat him, as people will, not knowing what to think. And always the *cicala* cried—

"‘Tocca, tocca l’asino
Sta qua l’accetterella.’

And hearing that voice and seeing no one, all left the ass in peace. At last, and finally, they found the *padrone* in the woods; and the *cicala* came out of his nest in the ear of the ass and said, as loud as he might, ‘Mother could not come, so I am come, I!’ And the charcoal burner heard that voice and saw no one. Then said he in his heart, ‘Yes, yes, I understand, they have made me horns.’ And so, Signoria, to this day, when one hears that dry evil voice in the woods . . .”

It was sunset. After a time I said to Giovanni: “Let us go through the woods for a little and find the wind.” And he led me by the paths he knew. Beneath us, but not far away, Abbadia S. Salvatore stood up sharp and marvellously clear against the fantastic rock of Radicofani. From the Badia and from S. Croce came the sound of the Angelus across the golden fields. Then there was silence.

In the woods it was already twilight, only sometimes from far away came the call of some night owl, the whistle of the night *cecca* through the still leaves. Presently we came to a little clearing to the south of the village, and crossing it, passing through a belt of trees, after a moment came out on the bare hillside under the stars.

The whole world seen from thence seemed to be lost in a soft veil of blue spangled with gold. Far and far away across the Umbrian hills, like a horn of pallid gold, like a silver sickle for some precious harvest, the moon hung over the world, that in her light gradually became visible ever so faintly, as though seen through some impalpable but lovely veil. Before us lay the whole breadth of the Patrimony. To the right on the hills, like the nest of an eagle, Castellazzara hung above the precipices of Monte Civitella. Dimly in the lonely obscurity of evening S. Casciano rose behind Celle on the sides of Monte Cetona. Somewhere lost in the valleys Proceno hid herself among the vines, Acquapendente behind her fantastic rocks. They were rather felt than seen, only far away Lago di Bolsena shone like a jewel, Monte Cimino rose like a ghost beside Monte

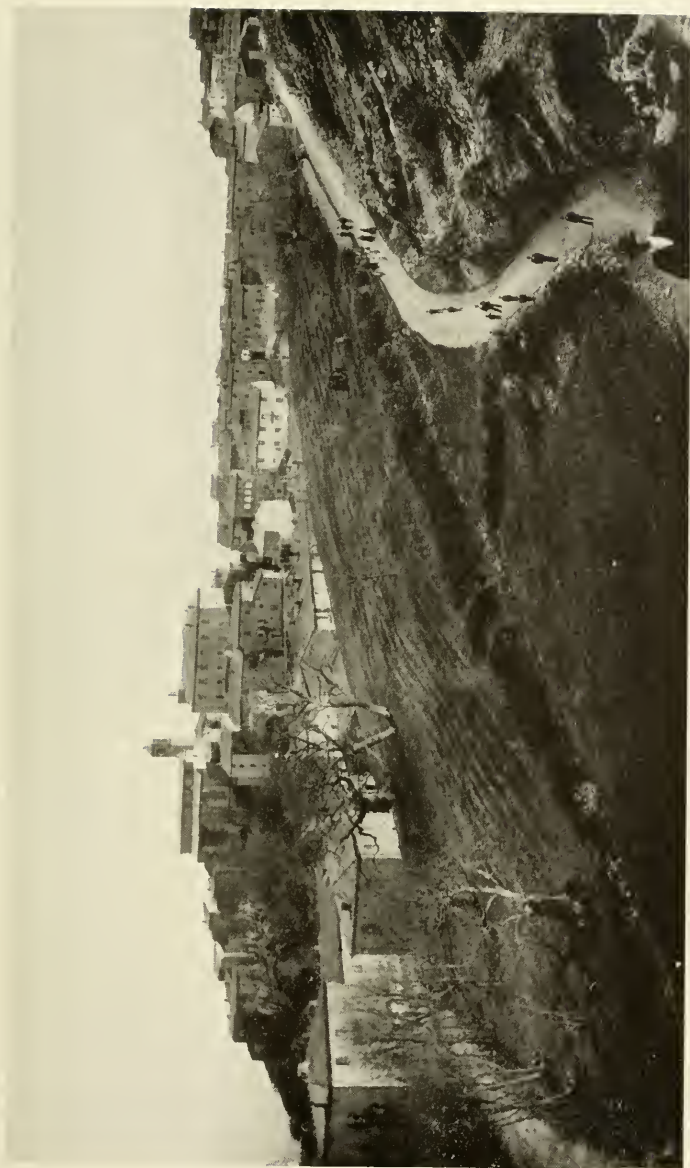
Venere, eternally separated by the faint line of hills like a bow, against which Montefiascone rose like a lovely thought in the unbreakable silence. And beyond lay the desert of the Campagna and that immortal thing which it has brought forth.

Suddenly in heaven a star burst like a blossom, and fell across the universe in a noose of light. Giovanni's hand trembled on my shoulder. But the silence could not be broken.

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And still the heat lay on the world like a woman thirsty for kisses. One night, because sleep would not come to me, I left my bed and went out into the woods. It was but a little way. From my window I could see down the aisles of the forest. I could hear the whisper of a million leaves as the wind passed slowly, softly by; I could hear the flight of a wood-pigeon and the chattering of the squirrels. But that night there was only silence.

It was some two hours before dawn. A profound change seemed to have come upon the Mountain since sunset. Everything was hushed. It was not the usual propitious silence of night that surrounded me, full of innumer-



CASTELLAZZARA



able, unheeded voices, but an absolute stillness as though the whole world were holding its breath. I stooped to the flowers, and found their heads were laid to the earth as though listening in fear, in expectation, of some approaching danger, and though the silence was so absolute nothing was asleep. The corn was all fallen one way, a sea of purple and gold ; in the woods the chestnut trees seemed waiting as though for some word of revelation ; now and then they lifted their leaves stealthily, without a sound, over the little streams which slunk swiftly, noiselessly on their way. What was it they awaited with the flowers and the corn, as though in fear and certainly without joy ? Was it the dawn ?

It broke over Cetona, at first like the smile of a ghost, mirthless and without gladness—a long, pallid line of golden foam upon a sultry cloud. Then it quickened into a burning pain ; a languid and unutterable agony, unable to express itself, seemed to possess the helpless day. Faintly, faintly the light struggled into the world, which lay hidden under immense shadows. The whole east gaped wider and wider, as though in an agony of articulation. Across the sky started great lines of burning red, as though

in some intolerable pain. Then, like some new, marvellous, and splendid beauty, profoundly tragic and without joy, the sun rose over the mountains and saw the beauty and weariness of the world.

It was in that hour, perhaps, that I understood for the first time that the dawn is sadder far than the sunset, even as birth is more tragic than death.

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At last the rain, the rain! It began at evening. Till noon the world was still lost in that strange silence. In the Badia the people knelt in languid groups before the Crucifix. Some had deserted even that, and were prostrate before the Relic of S. Marco; others bore lighted tapers, like tiny stars, to Madonna, who smiled and smiled, holding out her hands. And suddenly, without a warning of any sort, an immense boom of thunder broke the silence, and they forgot their prayers. Presently on the *Cima* the clouds gathered, the wind drove over the woods, the fields were a tossing sea of gold, the very dust rose up, and in a hideous dance, as of the thirsty dead, swirled and swayed and drove away the living. And out of the wind, as it were, came the bells, clanging,

clashing, hurtling all together, wild with joy, supplication, importunate noise, and thanksgiving. For at the first sign of a cloud the people ran to the belfries and cheered on the ringers, till the thunder itself was but a temporary accompaniment to the brazen tongues that seemed to demand of Heaven what it had been so reluctant to grant, the sweetness, the refreshment, the coolness, the mercy of the rain which would redeem the world from the terror of the sun.

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On the next morning the Mountain seemed to have awakened to a new life. The very world, that immense and beautiful world which it broods over, appeared to have run to it, as it were, with gifts—the gift of its own beauty. Hills and valleys, little cities too, that had till then, almost all the summer long, hidden themselves in the heat, suddenly were found round about her: Trasimeno seemed but a mile or two under the woods; Bolsena just a beautiful thing to be won to between morning and midday; and beyond and beyond . . . ? Who could tell what might not be seen high up on the hillside; Arezzo perhaps, certainly Cortona. And southward might one hope—ah!—for Rome?

It was already afternoon when Giovanni came for me, and when we set out it was not alone, for Suor Angelina—and she was in some sort my landlady—came with us. A strange and beautiful nature, for Sister Angelina, as it is the custom in the Mountain to call one's friends if they be women, simple of heart as she was, was in some sort an heiress, having inherited a vast number of chestnuts and the ground they grew on from her cousin, who, pious man that he was, dying about the time of the foundation of United Italy, and seeing the robbery that led to, left all he had, and that was no little thing, to her, and after her if she died childless to the Monks of Settignano, those Olivetani there whom the people call Frati. The poor woman, keen as all Italians are at a bargain, saw her goods daily slipping from her, for she had never married. Not without tears, though indeed she was one of the most joyous of good women, she thought upon this thing; and for this, if for no other cause, her great friend had come to be Ser Giovanni, President of the Mountain, the head, as I found, of the league which the people round about had formed when, seeing the German Mining Company—worse than any *Signorotti*—buying up

all their property "for nothing," they had sworn to sell no more. Suor Angelina was a woman of some three and sixty years, and of these she boasted as though she had used them well.

"Thursday next," she told me as we went on our way,—“Thursday next, as the Signoria knows, is the Festa of the Assumption of Maria Santissima. There will be a procession—yes, in spite of the strike; the priest told me so this morning in the Piazza. Sixty-three years old I am, and sixty-four times have I followed in these processions; for the first time I went my mother bore me yet in her body, and that day was I born. And Ser Giovanni knows well I speak truth. Is it not so, Vanni? Now, whether it was the excitement of that blessed Festa, or whether the heat of the sun, for it was very hot, I cannot say, but when she returned home in that hour I was born, and therefore I am named Maria Assunta Angelina.”

“But where are we going?” I asked.

We had left the highway to Podere Zaccaria, and taking to the woods on our left had followed a path past the outskirts of the mines, climbing ever round the Mountain towards Siena.

"Where are we going, Vanni? Has the Signore seen Baldassare's Cross? No? Then assuredly that is our way." And we followed as she said, in the wake of her talk.

"Listen, Signore, *there* was a man—do I not speak truth, Ser Giovanni?—Dio Mio, we shall never see his like. Whether it were sickness or grief, devil or such, Baldassare was better than any priest in Tuscany. Signore, he was a saint, and to think he died before I could walk."

"And who was he, then?" I ventured.

"Signore, he was a saint. Do not ask me where he was born: who knows where he was born? Do you know, Ser Giovanni, you who think you know everything? Ah, Signore, he does not know. Perhaps he was born in the Island—perhaps in the Mountain. *Chi lo sa?* But if you were sick he had but to touch your forehead with his lips and you were whole; if you were in grief he but looked upon you and you were happy; if some devil lurked in your house, he but marked the threshold with a cross of his spittle and it was gone. Thus he went through Tuscany. Signore, you know the cross above Vincigliata, you know the cross above Settignano, you know the cross on the way to Compiobbi, where the river winds so

suddenly in Val d'Arno? Well, it was he who set them there. He bore them on his back, these and a hundred more that neither you nor I will ever see, and he set them up for the love of Gesù Cristo, and in the sand beneath them he wrote with his finger the name of Maria Santissima. Such was Baldassare, that holy one. And to think he died when I was a little maid! Nevertheless, I too saw him—I. I lay in his arms, on his breast, next his heart, and he gave me water from some secret spring and healed me."

She was silent a moment, thinking. In the woods far away, in the silent afternoon, the strokes of an axe came to us rhythmically, musically, through the trees.

"Signore, it was my mother who took me to him; neither could my cousin, that Abbate of whom we have spoken, dissuade her. And we met him one day in the woods—I was not three years old then—and seeing me ailing he took me in his arms and kissed me, and gave me to drink of the water he carried in the bottle covered with wicker which he ever took along with him; and in a moment I was quite well. And if the Signore will believe, never have I known illness since then."

After a moment I said to her: "Baldassare of whom you speak I know not, but Lazzaretti, Lazzaretti of Arcidosso, was it not so he too healed the folk of the Mountain?"

"Lazzaretti!" A loud laugh from Giovanni, stalking along before us, reached me—"Lazzaretti!"

"The Signore is indeed deceived, Ser Giovanni, if he thinks that pig of Arcidosso may be named beside Baldassare."

Ser Giovanni turned and confronted us, for, like all Italians he too would not walk and talk.

"Signoria, I knew him, that little poor one of Arcidosso. Signoria, the air of the Maremma was in his brain. When the cholera came to the Mountain, they of Arcidosso died as the beasts die, because they look all day on Maremma; but we, we were well. And that David whom the carabinieri shot, he too had looked too long on Maremma."

"I also knew him—I," said Suor Angelina. "Only a month ago I spoke with his old mother. Who knows what has become of his children? They are fled away for shame. No, no, Signore, he was not like Baldassare. Miracles! *Dio Mio*, he contrived more miracles than San Francesco. He lived by miracles."

“Such as that famous one of the *barrocciao*, of which the Signore has heard doubtless,” said Ser Giovanni.

The Signore had not heard.

“Tell the Signore then, Ser Giovanni,” said Suor Angelina, and suddenly became silent.

“It befell in spring, Signoria, as many wonderful things contrive to do, and it happened that about that time David, called the Saint—ha! ha!—had begun to preach in the villages and to prophesy—not happily, the Signore may believe me. When he spoke of rain the clouds flew away, the *tramontana* blew terribly; when he spoke of frost, the sun broke the earth into dust; when he spoke of heat, men died in a single night on the *Cima* from cold. From the first the Saints disapproved of him. But he was of Arcidosso; who may abide the men of that village!”

“Or who shall keep them honest?” asked Suor Angelina, softly.

“Well, well, as the Signore may imagine, David called the Saint was most unhappy at his misfortune: say what he would God made it otherwise. So he took thought with himself; and knowing that alone in all the Mountain—

I speak not of women, Signoria—his brother believed in him, and that is a most strange thing, he took him aside one day and said to him: ‘To-morrow as thou goest with the *barroccio* to Santa Fiora and Pian Castagnajo, on this side of Seragiolo, where the road turns, overturn the *barroccio*, break everything in pieces, think not of anything at all, nor bewail what is done, I, David, will make all good; but see thou fail me not.’ And his brother, who loved him, answered, ‘Even so, David.’

“Now David was preaching the day following at Castel del Piano yonder, and, as it is said, that day he spoke better than he was used, when suddenly, in the heat of the sermon, he stopped dead, struck his forehead with his hands, and piped out! ‘*Ohimè! Ohimè!*—what is this that is come to pass? Alas! alas! the misfortune, the misfortune!’ And later, when the women had calmed him, he explained very sorrowfully that a terrible thing had befallen, that evil had come to his brother, there on the Mountain, and that he had lost all that was his. And it proved to be even as he said. Thus and thus David, called the Saint, began to serve God.”

"Was he not of Arcidosso?" asked Suor Angelina sweetly.

"So David was a fraud after all," I said to Giovanni. "Well, I am sorry."

"Who knows, Signore? He began badly, that is true, but later, ah! maybe God spoke to him. He said things so wonderful that the carabinieri shot him, and they were not evil things."

We had come out of the woods on to the hillside. Behind us, in a wilderness of enormous stones, grew the greatest chestnuts of the forest, while under the cliffs that from this shoulder of the Mountain towered some hundreds of feet sheer into the air, a little spring, Fonte del Papa, reminding me by its name, perhaps, of the advent of Pio II., bubbled miraculously from a fissure in the stone. As we continued on our way, ever mounting, we came at last on to the bare upland, that like a great buttress of the Mountain seemed to support the *Cima* itself on its enormous shoulder; and there on the summit, thrust into a heap of stones, stood an old cross of chestnut wood, broken now and disfigured by many winters, looking over Italy. And indeed in that clear air after the rain it was no small part

of Italy that lay before our eyes. On the left, to the north, Pienza rose on her hill, and close beside her Montepulciano. Almost at their feet lay Trasimeno, and beyond, Castiglione Fiorentino, and Cortona; while on the hither side of the lake stood Castiglione del Lago, on the farther side Passignano and Magione. Like a pale rose in a cup Perugia lay among the mountains, behind her rose the great peaks of the central Appenines beyond Gubbio. To the south-west rose the mountains of Norcia, and before them the beautiful valley of Spoleto. Farther south the Monti Sibillini shone against the sky, and farther still the Gran Sasso d'Italia white with eternal snows. Then to the extreme south I looked for Rome, but instead found only the outposts of the Campagna, Monte Soracte like a carved casket, and ever the most beautiful of all the mountains of Italy, Monte Cimino, and Monte Venere the gateway to Rome. After a long time Suor Angelina said softly, "It is good to be here, let us await the sunset."

So we waited there in silence for the end of another day.

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One day about a week later I had walked

over to Santa Fiora in the early morning, and returning at evening by the great road which girdles the whole Mountain I was surprised by sunset before I was half-way to Pian Castagnajo. Presently, as I reached the top of the pass by la Pianaccia, the whole world was lost in the glory of the hour after the setting of the sun, the hour that, here in the South, is the most beautiful moment of the day. The whole country in that soft, clear, golden light seemed blessed; the world glowed, and seemed almost to give light to the sky rather than to receive light from it. Something fortunate in the hour, some gladness in heaven, I thought, must have lent to the world for a moment a reflection of its beauty and its joy, so marvellously clear and translucent was the air, so quiet and holy lay the earth in an ecstasy of adoration. Was it in worship of the moon—the new moon, which lay like a *new* beautiful sign in heaven over the Mountain—that the whole world had gathered to itself this clarity and sweetness, and composed itself as though it were still indeed that Garden in which the Voice of God walked of old?

Presently, as I went on my way, I came upon an old man building a great fire of furze and

brushwood, and, a little lonely in the silence, I stayed to speak with him.

"And what are you going to do with the fire?" I said after the greeting.

"I am going to light it, Signore," he answered, laughing slyly. And he took some sulphur matches from his pocket, and choosing a faggot of broom, in a moment he set it ablaze and thrust it into the great heap of brushwood. A huge column of smoke rose in the air, and presently I heard the numberless voices of the fire talking together; then here and there little flames darted out, yellow and flickering, eagerly licking the air around the brushwood. Then a beautiful golden flame like a banner streamed from the summit of the pile, beating on the wind, vanishing and reappearing; a dangerous, lovely, and terrible thing, the sword of an angel.

"And why are you making a bonfire then?" I asked. "When I saw the sunset it seemed to me it must be a Festa in heaven. What Festa is it that you keep?"

"Not in heaven alone do they keep this vigil, but through the earth and through the sea also. Has the Signore forgotten, then, that

it is the Vigil of S. Maria Assunta? Does not the whole universe rejoice when God meets His Mother in the midst of the heavens, and leads Her to His jasper throne, and places on Her holy head the Crown of seven stars?" And he pointed to where Corona hung in heaven over the crescent moon.

So it was the Eve of the Assumption, and I had forgotten! He went on stirring the fire, the flames roaring above him, thrusting towards him their marvellous arms. Presently, as I watched him, he pointed far away southward across the world.

"Look! they have not forgotten."

Far and far away in the plain a fire shone like a star fallen on the earth; then another and another and another. Castellazzara flamed on the mountains, Proceno, Acquapendente, Sforzesca, Elciola, Lugherelle, Paladino in the plain. Then Radicofani shone forth, S. Casciano, and Celle; Torre Alfina in the mountains lighted her beacon, S. Lorenzo in the valley answered it; every village sang "Magnificat," and the hills answered, "Salve Regina."

Then, as I went on my way, I began to count the fires. Fifty-and-four shone in the Patri-

mony, seventy-and-two in Umbria, while in Tuscany—that corner of Tuscany that I could see—forty-and-seven rejoiced for the Coronation of the Queen of Angels. One hundred and seventy-three fires I counted at one moment on my way; nor were these anything but a fraction of those I could not see. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to say that from the *Cima* one might have counted over a thousand roses of flame cast at the feet of Madonna caught up to the Throne of Her Son. And the greatest of all was the huge beacon lighted on Mont' Amiata.

Dominating as it does, not Southern Tuscany alone, but the whole Patrimony between Acquapendente and Viterbo, the whole of Umbria from Trasimeno to Spoleto, Mont' Amiata on the Vigil of the Assumption is the centre of a ring of fire which reminds the world of the second birthday of Mary Madonna. Nor is it in the country-places alone that this Feast is kept with so much splendour. In Siena the whole city is illuminated, the Mangia Tower is picked out with lights, a beacon flames on the platform, and in the Campo a great display of fireworks is made. For on the day following the Feast,—in



Della Robbia

ALTAR-PIECE
(Albani)

Picci, S. Fiore

honour of Madonna too, as we shall do well to remember—Madonna, the feudal suzerain of Siena, of whose rights the City has ever been so jealous,—the Palio of August is run amid the frantic applause of the whole people.

Moreover, the Feast of the Assunta has a special significance in Mont' Amiata. David Lazzaretti speaks of *L'Assunta delle forti Alpi, Madonna, l'Imperatrice dell' Amiata mia*, and it is as herself, the centre of a *contado* not material certainly, but religious, stretching from far Arezzo to Viterbo, from the mountains of Norcia to the sea, that Mont' Amiata, the throne of the Empire of Madonna, has as it were imposed her own custom upon that vast country over which she broods. The cult of the Assumption is most ancient and widespread in all Italy, the cathedrals of Pisa, Siena, Prato, Spoleto, and half a hundred cities own Maria Assunta as their Titola. And in the Mountain her name—La Madonna dell' Abbadia S. Salvatore, La Madonna di Pian Castagnajo, La Madonna di Santa Fiora, La Madonna di Arcidosso known through all the Sanese—is as much more ancient than the dominion of Siena as the Mountain is more ancient than the

city, the work of God than the work of man.

Very humble and sweet was the procession of the Festa on the next day. Headed by the Company of the Sacre Cuore, the children, some two hundred of them, bearing lighted tapers, following the Crucifix of the Society, the Company of S. Marco, the men and women following the officers, among them Giovanni bearing aloft Madonna Herself, smiling and opening her arms, and at last the Priests in their copes, chanting in chorus, wound in the sunlight down the dusty road from the Abbey, through the narrow streets of the Castello to S. Croce. There followed a country Benediction; where, amid the many tapers, once more God was lifted up before our eyes that we might worship Him, and He give us, as of old, His Benediction.

In the evening, after sunset, they dance under the chestnuts in the moonlight to the sound of the mandolines. Sometimes a girl will dance with a girl, a man with a man; but that is only a beginning; presently each claims a partner, but without ceremony, and leading her apart, begins that strange, delightful country dance which is so graceful, so languid,

and yet so full of life. And amid the more learned movements intrude even yet many a rustic figure that some do not know, but, with the good Latin patience and courtesy, are well content to watch, sitting on the ground under the trees, in little groups, while here and there a lantern shines, and the whole *piana* is flooded by the moonlight streaming through the trees.

Long after I was gone to bed, half asleep, half awake, I heard the strange, far-off sweetness of the mandolines, and through my dreams, in an endless vista of trees, I saw them pass and repass in that strange rhythmic dance, laughing together in praise of Madonna.

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It was about two o'clock on a hot afternoon some days later that, amid a joyous company mounted on asses, men and women alike riding astride in the fashion of the Mountain, I set out for the summit of Mont' Amiata to see the sunset. For myself, though all were mounted I went afoot, always a little way before them, while as we climbed through the heat by the winding path in the shadow of the woods their voices continually came to me, up many a forest glade, their laughter, the gay shouting of the

muleteers, their strange, long-drawn-out cries to their beasts, as in some story by a fourteenth-century novelist of an adventure on the Mountain.

The way to the *Cima*, which stands some 5700 feet above the level of the sea, passes first the Church of the Madonna, and then, turning suddenly to the left, across the entrance to the mines, climbs at once into the chestnut woods, and, always ascending on its way, soon comes out into beech woods, into a forest of oak, and at last into mere oak scrub, with here and there a gigantic tree casting its shadow over the way, till after some three hours of climbing it crosses a beautiful *piana* under the cone of the Mountain, and mounting by a sort of staircase leads you at last to the bare summit, a huge pile of enormous stones, from which, as from the eyrie of an eagle, the whole world seems to lie at your feet, standing as you are on the highest ground in Tuscany. The view, which is both wide and beautiful, embraces the whole Mountain. To the west lies the sea, with the islands of Corsica, Elba, and Monte Cristo; while between it and the Mountain lies the purple and blue Maremma. To the north Siena stands on her hill, and all

between lies the tawny, burnt plain ; and beyond, the mountains open suddenly, giving you a glimpse, but only a glimpse, of Val d'Arno. To the east lie the mountains of the Casentino, and the valleys of Umbria, and the hills over the valleys ; and there Lago Trasimeno shines, and the lake of Montepulciano, and half a hundred cities, from Cortona and Perugia to Assisi and Orvieto ; while behind, rise the mountains above Gubbio, the great snowy peaks above Norcia, the heights of the Gran Sasso d'Italia. And yet in spite of the splendour and breadth of the world to the north, to the east, to the west, it was southward I looked longest and most often, for there beyond the desert, over the farthest beautiful hills, stood Soracte like a carved pyramid, and behind her the Campagna as I knew, and in the Campagna Rome. Should I not see her, after all, in the clearness of evening, when the dazzling sun had been drowned in the sea ?

Later, when supper had been spread at the mouth of a great cave carved with the initials, as it is said, of Carlo Magno, who stood here to see his kingdom, that gay company, returning at random from their explorations, the

bonfire was lighted as on the Vigil of the Assumption, and, the meal ended, we wandered away as we would to watch the sunset. Presently I found myself alone on the great stones of the *Cima*. An immense silence full of sadness had fallen on the world, the Mountain was lost in a dome of rosy fire which reached almost to the horizon, where, all round, ran a line of pallid gold: only in the west, like the very Host, the Sun, shrouded in a golden mist, hung in heaven over the mystery of the sea. It was as though the earth itself were about to be confounded with its God. Slowly the light changed. It was the moment of benediction. Great tongues of flame stole into the firmament, the hills took fire from the splendour of the sky, across the world lay the shadow of the Mountain, the east was like a smoking censer. Again the light changed, above the globe of the Sun rose a cross of pure gold that stood over the world out of the heaving waters, and above the cross great bands of purple bound the sky, passing into gold again, and then into green and then into silver, but at last into the pure, unsullied blue of the domed heaven.

In the swift flying moments, as of the pro-

found silence, in my heart I seemed to hear the ancient words—

“Tantum ergo Sacramentum
Veneremur cernui
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui.”

It was already twilight when, all on foot, we turned again on our way—ah! for the last time—to Abbadia San Salvatore.

VII

TO RADICOFANI

IT was one of the last mornings of August when I set out for Radicofani. I went by the old mediæval road, the way of the mules, not out of Porta Mulina as it happened, but following the great road past the Castello. I took the first byway on the left after crossing the torrent by the Church of Madonna delle Rimedie. By this rough and stony way one may reach Radicofani in some two hours and more of hard walking. The road leads, at first steeply, down the bare shoulders of the Mountain, after a time winding among the poor vines of the upper Paglia valley, and at last to the dry river-bed itself. And it is just there, at a ruinous place without habitation called Pietre-Grosse, that, as I think, the lost and almost forgotten town of Callimala once stood on the old Via Francigena that now passes—as it has done, indeed, for many



RADICOFANI

centuries—high up under Radicofani on the way to Rome. For originally, as I have said already, that way to Rome did not pass through Radicofani, but through the Borgo of Callemala or Callimala, which Repetti tells us was on the slope of the mountain of Radicofani on the banks of the Paglia. Pietre-Grosse might seem to be the very place. The old road was destroyed by order of the Commune of Siena in 1442, and the new road then built ran through Radicofani in order to prevent more easily the entrance of *condottieri* from the Papal States. For, as Ghino di Tacco had found in his day, so they found in theirs, the gorge of the Paglia was a fine secret place in which to assemble and to hold the road into Tuscany.

Little is known of Callimala, though we have a record of its Church of S. Cristina as early as the tenth century. And in 1300, on April 21, we hear of it again in the *Carte Diplomatiche della Badia di S. Salvatore*, where Professor Zdekauer tells us, "Divers persons of Radicofani and of Castello della Badia promised Fra Giovanni of the Monastery of S. Salvatore *di stare lunga la strada pubblica a vendere il vino . . .* that is to say, to erect booths along the highway in the neighbour-

hood of Callimala to sell wine and other victuals to the passers-by," perhaps, as we may think, on the occasion of the Easter Festa or the Pilgrimages of Holy Week.

Almost nothing more seems to be known of this lost city, which has now utterly disappeared, and indeed, unless, as I think, the stones of Pietre-Grosse may be taken for its ruins, no vestige of it remains at all.

Leaving this lonely and desolate place, I climbed again into the wind—for the *tramontana* was blowing lustily—by the paved, steep way to Radicofani between the spoiled fields on the mountain-side, where a few sheep, poor and needy, watched by a little maid in tatters, were feeding. And because the way was steep, and because the wind was so splendid, it was already eleven o'clock when I came to the inn of Radicofani, under the fortress of Ghino di Tacco.

Originally belonging to the monks of S. Salvatore, in 1153 Radicofani was divided, and half the Castello given by the Abbot to Pope Eugenius III. and his successors, together with half the *Corte* and Borgo of Callimala. Later the place formed the last fortress of the Patrimony of St. Peter, or the last

fortress of the Sanese, as it happened, for both possessed it, the one after the other, during many years. Finally it came to Siena, and later formed part of the Granducato of Tuscany. To-day it is a little walled village, straggling round the jagged hill under the fortress of Ghino, with three churches, a fine clock-tower, and many old houses; a beautiful palace, evidently the Palazzo del Governo, now a prison, covered with coats of arms; while without the gates are a Capuchin convent, a pretty place enough, among trees too, now secularised; and the old Posta, the Great Duke's Inn, where Richard Lassels on his way to Rome in the seventeenth century tells us he dined. "From Siena," he says, "we went to *Bon Convento*, *Tornieri*, *San Quirico*, inconsiderable places vpon the rode, and so to *Radicofino*, a strong *Castle* vpon a high hill, built by *Desiderius*, *King of the Longobards*. This is the last place of the *Florentin State*, but not the least in strength. Dineing here, at the *Great Dukes Inn* at the bottom of the hill, we went to lodge at *Acquapendente*, which is some twelve miles off, and the first towne of the *Popes* state."

Of the three churches within the walls, S.

Antonio, beside S. Pietro, in the little Piazza sopra Mura, looking towards Rome, contains nothing; but as though to make up for the emptiness of his brother, S. Pietro has a wealth of beautiful things, the work of the della Robbia, whom, as I suppose, the Sforza of Santa Fiora brought here, when, as their arms over the Palazzo del Governo go to show, they ruled in the place. Entering the church by the western door, over the first altar to the right is a statue of S. Catherine, made of that humble terra-cotta we know so well, and enamelled simply white, a touching and lovely piece of work one is surprised to find in this lonely place. But then, since all the guide-books have ignored Radicofani, as they have ignored Mont' Amiata, one expects to find nothing there, whereas both Radicofani and Santa Fiora are as rich in della Robbia ware as any city in Tuscany, save Florence. Here in S. Pietro, opposite that statue of S. Catherine, on the first altar to the left is a lovely altar-piece of blue and white, with Madonna in the midst, with S. John Baptist on one side, and S. Antonio Abbate, with his pig, on the other. In the right transept is another splendid altar-piece of the Crucifixion

with S. Mary Magdalen kneeling at the foot of the Cross; and in the left transept yet another, Madonna in the midst with S. Catherine of Alexandria and S. Michael Archangel. In the little Church of S. Agata, in the main street of Radicofani, we find their work again, in the great altar-piece behind the high altar, of Madonna between S. Francesco, S. Agata, S. Lorenzo, and S. Catherine. On the left wall of the nave, high up in a little cupboard, is hidden a curious and tiny model in plaster of Radicofani itself, with Madonna above, protecting it, together with S. Agata and S. Emilio.

How did the Robbia clan come to so far-away a place as this? And who were they of all those we may name? It might seem certain that the Sforza Lords of Santa Fiora in the fifteenth century, as we shall see, holding Radicofani too as Podestà, brought Andrea della Robbia and his pupils perhaps not only to Santa Fiora, where so much of their work remains, but to Radicofani also, where in the small but beautiful churches even to-day, their work, so full of coolness in the summer heats, shines with the country flowers upon the altars, not less in place than they.

S. Pietro too, the parish church, has a treasure less tangible, certainly, but perhaps to some of us, at any rate, not less precious than its della Robbia ware, in a legend "of the judgment which befel a very great and cruel usurer of Radicofani." Fra Filippo tells the tale in his *Ensamples*.

"There was," says he, "in the town of Radicofani a wretched man; and albeit he became very old it might be said of him as saith the proverb: 'Accursed is the child of a hundred years old.' All the days of his life this wretched man lent money upon usury, and never had he any sickness. And although he had many vices, especially was he covetous and avaricious and cruel and an enemy of the poor, in far greater measure than the devil had known how to make him; and rather would he that the victuals and other things, which at any time remained over in his house, should be flung away than that they should be given to the poor; and never was he seen to give alms'; nor was he willing that any should be given in his house. Now when his accursed days were ended, he was smitten suddenly with an apoplexy; wherefore they laid him upon his bed. Afterward two young men were sent for

a venerable physician of very holy life, who was a native of the town and dwelt therein. And this befell between two and three hours after nightfall. And when the physician had departed from his house toward the house of the sick man, and had gone half-way thither, albeit the weather was clear and calm, and the heaven was full of stars, and no cloud was to be seen in the sky, yet there came a passing great thundering and lightening so that all men were astonished ; and, when he had reached the door of the house, there followed another thunder clap with lightening twice as great as at the first, and, in like manner, all men were stunned thereby. And afterward, when he had entered the courtyard and would have gone into the chamber of the wretched sick man, there came a third flash of lightening, with a thundering so horrible that it stunned whomsoever was in the chamber ; and the physician and those who were with him in the house fell to the ground, and all the windows of the chamber where the sick man lay were broken and burst open, and all the lights which were in the house were put out ; and they remained prostrate upon the ground for the space of a quarter of an hour or more ;

and so terrified were they that none of them dared to raise himself up. Afterward, at the last, they lighted a lamp and went to the sick man and found him dead. And thus the devil carried away his soul.

“ Now, when I had already written the aforesaid ensample divers times, according as it had been told me by the son of the said physician, I afterward heard it from the lips of the physician himself, the which was a man of credit, at least ninety years old, of holy life, and a passing venerable person. He told me that there came on a sudden so great rain and hail and tempest that it seemed that all the town must be swallowed up ; and all the house trembled and all the tiles of the roof thereof were beaten together ; and whoever was in the chamber swooned away ; and, in the morning, all along the road which led from the house of the dead usurer out of Radicofani, for seven miles, the ground was covered with toads. And on one side of the road and on the other, the trees and vines and thickets were all broken and splintered. And neither before nor after in that mountain of Radicofani was there ever seen a single toad. Moreover, the physician told me that the priest of the town

buried that usurer in the church for money; wherefore afterward, in the night time, there were heard such knockings and such tempest and clamour in the church that no man in all the town might sleep therefor. Wherefore, in the morning, the people of the town hastened to the church and dug up that wretched body and buried it without the town in the most base and shameful place that they could find."

It is, however, to a more admirable villain that our thoughts continually turn, as we look up to the Rocca, that strange, fierce, almost grotesque fortress, ruined now, which under rain or sun dominates the whole village, and hangs there in the sky like some threatening *stemma*, some fantastic coat of arms. The country-folk tell you that Ghino di Tacco still haunts the valley of the Paglia, and here in his own mountain, certainly, the remembrance of the man whose victim Dante¹ met in Purgatory is never very far away—

"Quivi era l'Aretin, che dalle braccia
Fiere di Ghin di Tacco ebbe la morte."

(Canto vi. 13-14.)

But little doubtless remains of the fortress Ghino built on that mountain-top, whose scarped height overlooks not only the valley

of the Paglia and the road to Rome, but the valley of the Orcia and the way to Siena, the pass over Cetona too, and the roads to Chiusi and Umbria. As you climb to-day up that rough, steep way, among the stones, to where, sailing high in air, the ruined castle still leers across the world, it is the remnants of the Sienese and Papal stronghold you pass, and yet it is certainly not of them you are thinking, but of the cruel exploits of that ruined gentleman, turned highwayman, who slew Benincasa to avenge his father, and captured the Abbot of Cligni, and won thereby peace for a little, but fell at last under the daggers perhaps of the Counts of Santa Fiora, who hated him and whom he hated.

Ghino di Tacco is a characteristic figure of his time. There must have been many such in Italy when the *Signorotti*, having acquired their lordships rather than conquered them, as Aquarone insists, and the opportunity for any personal enterprise of the sort had passed away, many a patrician found himself almost starving, and at the mercy of the crowd in the city where he lived or had taken refuge. This seems to have been Ghino's case. There are many theories of his birth, but Aquarone,

following Tommasi in this, comes to the conclusion that he was the son of Tacco Monaceschi de' Pecorai da Torrita. However this may be, Ghino was brought up as a boy to a wild and violent life, till his family, his father, his brother Turino and himself, "disgusted with the Republic," as Gigli says, were *cacciati di Siena*, expelled from Siena, as Boccaccio tells us, one day in 1279. They became robbers, haunting the way between Siena and Asinalunga, till one day Siena thought fit to attend to them with a force some six hundred strong. Then Siena occupied Torrita.

One day when Ghino was away on the road, Tacco, his father, and Turino, his brother, were taken by the Sienese and imprisoned in Siena, and later tried before Messer Benincasa di Laterina in the Aretino, Vicar of the Podestà. They were hanged; but Ghino was free, and, as Aquarone puts it, while he was at large "the air of Siena no longer suited Messer Benincasa." So he sought some other business elsewhere, and having no little reputation in jurisprudence he became *Auditor Papæ* and went to Rome. Even there, as it proved, he was not safe. Ghino was not to be denied. He had often looked up to the height of Radicofani as he

lurked in the valley, perhaps often hidden there to spy out his prey, on a summer evening when the stars shine like jewels in a monstrance round that spotless Host the moon. So, tired of robbing on the road as a common highwayman, and hoping to make himself still a lord, he determined to secure himself in that place. Nor was it long before it happened so, for with him to think was to act. And once established there, like a bird of prey he sat all day looking towards Rome. It was perhaps dawn when he set out with "some four hundred of his brigands," as Gigli says, all on swift horses, heartily ready. Through that dawn, and the day and the night, they rode to Rome. They surprised a gate and held it. Then Ghino, with a few followers, rode through the city on to the Capitol, where he knew he would find Benincasa about his business. There, indeed, "in an upper room at audience" he found him, killed him on the very judgment-seat, and, taking his head, came away without hindrance. And remounting his horse he rode in the midst of his few followers through the City, leaving it by the same gate through which he had come in, and so back to Radicofani, that he was then able to call his own.

Now it was with something of the same persistent violence, less sinister, but not less fearless, that the enemy of God, the Pope, and the Counts of Santa Fiora, made his peace with Boniface VIII., as Boccaccio tells us, yet he came to die at last like a gentleman truly, and a lord, but at bay, fighting, slain by an hundred wounds.

“Ghino di Tacco,” Boccaccio tells us in Elisa’s story from the second novel on the last day of the *Decameron*,—“Ghino di Tacco, a man both for his boldness and for his robberies sufficiently famous, being banished from Siena, and at enmity with the Counts of Santa Fiora, caused Radicofani to revolt from the rule of the Church of Rome, and establishing himself there, he and his band robbed throughout the neighbourhood. Now Boniface VIII. being Pope in Rome, the Abbot of Cligni came to Court, and he was believed to be one of the richest Prelates in the world. His stay at Court having somewhat injured his digestion, he was advised by the doctors to go to the Baths of Siena where he would be cured without a doubt. Obtaining leave from the Pope, without caring for the fame of Ghino, he set out on his road with much pomp of harness

and baggage, with many horses and a whole retinue of servants. Ghino di Tacco, hearing of his coming, set his snares, and, without losing the meanest stable-boy, in a narrow place captured the Abbot with all his household and his possessions. This done, he sent, well accompanied, to the Abbot one of the wiliest of his men, who on his behalf told him very politely that he must be pleased to dismount and to visit Ghino in the Castello. When the Abbot heard this he was furious, and replied that he wanted for nothing, that one like himself had nothing to do with Ghino; but that he would continue on his way, and he would like to see who would stop him. To whom the Ambassador, speaking humbly, said: 'Messere, you are come to a place where, save for the power of God, nothing makes us afraid, and where excommunications and interdicts are themselves excommunicated; and therefore it would be better to satisfy Ghino in this.' During this conversation, the place had already been surrounded by brigands, so that the Abbot, seeing himself and those with him prisoners, very scornfully followed the Ambassador towards the Castello; and there went along with him all his people, and all his

harness. Dismounting there, as Ghino wished, he was placed all alone in a small room of a palace rather dark and inconvenient, and all his household, each according to his quality, was well lodged, and for the horses and the baggage, they were taken good care of, no one touching anything. Later Ghino himself went to the Abbot and said to him: 'Messere, Ghino, whose guest you are, sends praying you to be pleased to tell him where you were going and on what occasion.' The Abbot, who like a wise man, had already abated some of his haughtiness, told him where he was going, and why. When Ghino heard this, he went off determined to cure him without any baths. Having ordered a great fire to be kept constantly burning in the Abbot's room which was small, he did not revisit him till the next morning, and then in the whitest napkin he brought him two slices of bread, toasted, and a great cup of vernaccia da Corniglia, the Abbot's own, and said to him: 'Messere, when Ghino was very young he studied in medicine and he says that there will never be a better medicine for your complaint than that he will give you, of which these things which I bring are the beginning, and therefore partake of them and

be comforted.' The Abbot, who would rather eat than be witty, though still with a certain disdain, ate the bread, and drank the vernaccia : then he began to say many things, a little haughtily, asking many things and advising many things, and especially he demanded that he might see Ghino himself. Hearing this, Ghino took no notice of much that he said, answered courteously the rest, and declaring that Ghino would visit him, very soon departed, only returning on the following day again with toasted bread and vernaccia : and so he did many days till he found the Abbot had eaten some dried beans which he had purposely carried and left there : then on behalf of Ghino he asked the Abbot how he was. The Abbot replied : 'It appears to me that I should be well enough if I were out of his hands, after that I should have no greater desire than to eat, so thoroughly have his remedies cured me.'

"Ghino then had a beautiful room prepared with the Abbot's own belongings, and caused a fine banquet to be set out, to which, with many men of the Castello, were invited all the household of the Abbot. The following morning he went to him and said, 'Messere, since you feel well, it is time you should quit

this infirmary.' Then taking him by the hand he led him into the room he had prepared ; and leaving him there with his own people he went off to make sure the banquet should be magnificent. The Abbot amused himself a little with his people, and gave them an account of his life, while they, on the other hand, told him how surpassing well they had been entertained by Ghino. But the hour for dining was come ; the Abbot and the others were nobly entertained with excellent food and wines, though Ghino did not even then declare himself. When the Abbot had been treated in this fashion for some days, Ghino, having made them put all his goods into a great room and all his horses, even to the last pony, into a court under it, went to the Abbot and asked him how he felt and whether he thought himself well enough to go on horseback. And the Abbot replied that he felt well enough, and was indeed thoroughly cured, and that he would be perfectly well if he could only get out of Ghino's hands. Then Ghino brought him into the room where were all his goods and all his whole household, and causing him to look from a window at all his horses, he said : ' Messere Abate, you ought to know

that it is not wickedness of heart which has caused Ghino di Tacco—for I am he—to become a highway robber and an enemy of the Court of Rome, but rather his position as a gentleman, driven from his own house, and the necessity to defend his life and nobility against many powerful enemies; but you appear to be an honourable lord, and, as I have cured you of your illness, I do not intend to treat you as I should another who should fall into my hands, taking from him what might please me. On the contrary, I intend that, having considered my necessities, you should give me what you think is owing. Here is all that is yours: from that window you see your horses in the courtyard; take, therefore, either a part or the whole as it shall please you; from this hour you may go or stay, as you will.'

"The Abbot, astonished to hear such generous words from a highwayman, being much delighted, felt his anger and disdain suddenly dissolve into kindness, and in his heart grew a wish to become Ghino's friend. Running to him to embrace him, he said: 'I swear to God that to gain the friendship of such an one as I take you to be, I might well suffer a deeper injury than you have inflicted on me

here. Cursed be the evil fortune which has led you to such a damnable life as this!' Then taking only a few necessities and some of his horses, he left the rest to Ghino, and returned to Rome.

"Now the Pope had heard of the Abbot's capture, and had been much distressed by it. When he saw him he asked him if the baths had benefited him; to which the Abbot smilingly answered: 'Holy Father, I found, before arriving at the baths, a physician who has thoroughly cured me.' Then he told him the story, and, urged thereto by his generosity, asked a favour. The Pope, imagining that he would ask some other thing, freely granted him what he should ask. 'Holy Father,' said the Abbot, 'what I wish to ask of you is, that you give a free pardon to Ghino di Tacco, my doctor, because, among all estimable people I have met, he is the most worthy, and the harm he does is to be imputed rather to bad fortune than to an evil heart; change, then, this bad fortune by giving him something from which he can live according to his position, and I do not doubt but that in a little time he will pay you as he has paid me.' Hearing this the Pope, who had a great soul and loved valiant men,

said he would do it willingly if, indeed, it was as he said. With this promise, Ghino came to Court, where the Pope, soon convinced of his worth and reconciled to him, gave him a great Priory with a hospital, and made a Knight of him. There he remained the friend and servant of Holy Church, and of the Abbot of Cligni as long as he lived."

Thus far Boccaccio, but Da Imola tells us that the Pope created him Cavaliere di S. Giovanni, and that in his benefice he maintained *splendida vita*. As Knight of S. John, and the Pope's very good friend, he doubtless found it easier to deal with the Sienese Republic. Later, Da Imola says he retired to Fratta, perhaps his native village, a Castello between Torrita and Sinalunga in Val di Chiana. However that may be, not long after his son Dino became Archbishop of Pisa. The Counts of Santa Fiora, however, would not pardon him nor give him peace. As great robbers as himself, it may be they resented his success, and especially his peace with the Church. One day as he went about in Sinalunga he was set upon by a number of armed men, Da Imola tells us, and bravely defending himself, but in vain, he fell pierced by an hundred wounds.

VIII

BAGNI DI S. FILIPPO, CAMPIGLIA D'ORCIA, AND VIVO

IT was again very early in the morning when I set out along Via Francigena northwards for the Bagni di S. Filippo, and lingering by the way came to that white, burning place towards midday. Hidden away as it were, in the cup of a geyser in Val d'Orcia, beside the torrent of Rondinaja, the little place is like a white, glistening scar in the tawny valley, covered with the stalactite deposit of the waters that cure the ills they say of all Sardinia and Maremma. The village of S. Filippo was originally the property of the monks of Abbazia S. Salvatore, till it passed from them to the Commune of Orvieto, and then to the Visconti of Campiglia d'Orcia, towering above on the bleak hillside like some fantastic pinnacle of the Mountain. The Visconti did not hold it long, however, and

at last, like every other village in this country, it came into the power of the Republic of Siena.

The modern buildings in their heroic attempts at comfort seem to shame the remains of older baths, of which, however, the earliest notice belongs to the fourteenth century. It was at the Baths of Petriuolo, of Macereto, Vignone, Rapolano, and S. Casciano that in the Middle Age the best society of Siena met together during the hot months, and as Signor Falletti-Fossati in his *Costumi Sanese*, and Mr. William Heywood in his admirable and too little known *Ensamplers of Fra Filippo*, tell us,—nor are the novelists, as we have seen, wanting in evidence,—thither came ecclesiastics and nobles from all Tuscany, and even from Rome. “From all directions, on horseback, on foot, in litters, in carriages, or in carts drawn by buffaloes, with children, *in salmis sive cistis*,” says Mr. Heywood, quoting Signor Falletti-Fossati, “they thronged to the various baths of the *contado*, where they enjoyed the freedom of country life and the benefit of the waters.” And though, as I have said, it is true we know nothing of Bagni di S. Filippo before the beginning of the fourteenth century, we may be sure that it too was one of those places of

villegiatura, only smaller and less known than Vignone, where S. Catherine of Siena, then but fourteen years old, was taken by her parents in the hope that the gay society she would meet there might turn her thoughts from the conventual life which she had already chosen as her own. "Each bather," Mr. Heywood tells us, "paid a tax or toll to the purchaser *delle gabelle dei bagni*, which varied from six denari to two soldi, according as the individual who paid it was a noble, a doctor, or a burgess, and whether he arrived on horseback or on foot. The payment of this tax entitled him who paid it to use the bath for the whole season, or if he preferred it to change from one establishment to another. . . . In the fourteenth century the arrangements at the Bagni were sufficiently primitive. The *Statuto del Comune di Siena* . . . explains that it had been provided that a house should be built on the plain of the Bath of Macereto, with a wall at least six braccia high and distant four braccia from the women's bath. On this was to be painted in good colours an affresco of the Virgin, Christ, and the Apostles James and Philip. In the open space in front of the house there was a foun-

tain, in the centre of which stood a hollow marble column. The water '*pro melioramento dicte aque*' descended like rain into the basin below, and was then carried by channels, constructed for the purpose, into two *vasche*, one of which was used by the men and the other by the women. . . .

"A little before the bathing season commenced, namely in May and June, the Signori selected certain *bonos legales et fidedignos homines* who repaired to the various baths, examined the houses, the chambers and the *stationes* existing there; inspected the furniture and the beds, ascertained how many there were of them, and how equipped, and in what manner they were adorned; fixed the prices of lodgings, and compelled the proprietors to place a notice *de licteris crossis supra hostium et in pariete cuiusque camere et stationis*, stating the number of beds available, and the price asked for them. It is, however, clear that the *stationarii* could only hope to accommodate a very small proportion of the bathers, and that the majority of them were compelled to seek shelter in tents and pavilions, pitched in the open country in the neighbourhood of the *stabilimenti*."

The Bagni di S. Filippo were supposed to be good for rheumatism and cutaneous diseases. Certainly from the year 1400 the place has been a populous Castello. The baths, if they then existed, seem to have been but little known, and it was one of the good deeds of Cosimo I. to establish or revive them. In 1512, certainly, the magnificent Pandolfo Petrucci came here to cure his asthma, but got no better, and setting out hence on the 20th May for Siena, died at S. Quirico on the following day. More than a hundred years later, in 1635, Ferdinando II., Grand Duke of Tuscany, cured himself here of a headache, as we may read in the inscription taken from the old baths—

“Ferdinandus II Magnus Hetruriæ Dux V
 Dum Adversa Valetudine Laboraret
 Thermis Hisce
 Capitis Languore Depulso
 Bene Convaluit
 Lælius Guglielmus
 Ob Restituti principis Gloriam
 Hoc egregiæ Medelæ Monumentus
 Posteris excitavit A.D. MDCXXXV.”

Very early on the following morning, in fear of the heat in that low place, I climbed out of the white chasm of S. Filippo on to the bare, burnt hillside, on my way to Campiglia

d'Orcia. On that lonely, rude and beautiful way, I met no one save a little girl spinning thread from the distaff, as she minded a few poor sheep anxiously nibbling among the spare, dried grass, over which the wind passed and repassed with a sibilant sound from the valley to the hills. It was not much past eight o'clock when I came to Campiglia. Set high on a sudden torn pinnacle of rock, that rises almost like a tower from the great northern bastion of Mont' Amiata, the Rocca of Campiglia, all that is left of it, towers over the squalid village crouched beneath, like an arrogant lord over a poor and beaten man. The place itself, the lordship, consists of this village and two ancient and ruined fortresses. The larger of these, as Repetti tells us, was the *Cassero* or *Palazzo* of the despots of Campiglia, which rises behind the Borgo ; the other, 1500 *braccia* above the sea, stands on the summit of a higher mass of rocks called Campigliaccia, a quarter of a mile or more away to the east.

Passing through the village to the higher ground behind it, not without difficulty, I scrambled half-way up to the first of these fortresses. There I met the wind. It caught

me round about, and flung me against the brutal rocks of that devil's eyrie, seeming to laugh at my efforts to win to the summit. But I had set my heart on standing on the pinnacle, whence of old the good men of Siena flung down Visconti's men. At last, not without fear and labour, I succeeded. I found myself on a platform of rock covered with tufa, at the top of a tower of rock, precipitous on all sides, save that by which I had climbed, and even there very steep. The whole space of the platform was not more than twenty square feet. Yet it was here, on this inaccessible tower, that the Visconti built their nest, that "larger *cassero* or palace" of which Repetti speaks. It seems impossible; there is scarcely room for a tower, and none at all for a palace, and one might more easily hurl stones down thence than bring them up. And, indeed, that is what they did. In the village street, beside the post office, stand the great granite stones, in shape like cheeses, they once rolled down on their assailants. Two of these only, dropped into the village from that lofty fortress, might seem able to destroy it. Judge, then, how the people loved their lords, and how these in their turn com-

pelled obedience. And truly the sight of these ponderous missiles, and of the jagged height, fills one with admiration for the persistence, force, and courage of the good citizens of Siena, who in 1234 succeeded in storming both this fortress and the Campigliaccia.

These despots, who for so long held their folk here in such perilous safety, were the Visconti, not the Milanese Visconti, but apparently a local stock of nobles bearing that name. They were, it seems, simply the viscounts (*vice-comites*) of Campiglia; at first, as their name implies, they were perhaps merely the agents or delegates of those ancient Counts who, long after their authority in Siena itself had passed to the Bishops, and from the Bishops to the Commune, still represented the Emperor more or less effectually in the towns of the *contado*. The first notice we have of them seems to be in an instrument of 1071, which was executed in the presence of a certain Count Raineri, son of Guido, Visconte of Campiglia. Later, in 1163, Viscount Sinibaldo of Campiglia was in Montepulciano at the time of the publication of a *placitum* by the Imperial Legate in favour of the Abbey of S. Antimo; while in 1197 we find Napoleone,

son of Sinibaldo, promising to pay three silver marks yearly by way of tribute to the Republic of Siena. It was, however, Pepo, the son of Tancredi, who held the place in 1234, when, having sworn allegiance and friendship to the Sienese, he went over to the Orvietani and the Florentines in the affair of Montalcino. For his perjury, as we have seen, Campiglia was stormed and taken from him. For a time an agent of the Commune seems to have resided in Campiglia, but in 1254 the Florentines insisted that it should be restored to the Visconti; and six years later we find Pepo Visconti fighting against Siena at the battle of Montaperti. In 1264 Campiglia was again besieged by the Sienese, and though Pepo and Napoleone made good their escape to Orvieto, their citadel was once more taken and destroyed. Henceforward the Visconti gave comparatively little trouble; Orvieto was exhausted by internal quarrels, and growing weaker year by year, and when Siena became Guelf no assistance could be looked for from Florence. Thus they who had once held sway not only over Campiglia, but over S. Casciano and Figline, whose influence extended not only into the valleys of Orcia

and Paglia, but as far as the Chiana, were compelled to bend their necks to the difficult yoke of the Communes, and in the year 1374 we find that they alone of all the nobles of the *contado* remained faithful to Siena in the war against the Salimbeni. The family continued to rule in Campiglia till its extinction in the fifteenth century.

I had not much time to linger in Campiglia, and indeed there is but little to see save the Rocca, for I wished to reach Vivo by midday, and Abbadia S. Salvatore by evening. So after half an hour on that windy platform, whence you may see Radicofani splendid against the sky, and Castiglione d'Orcia, the stronghold of the Salimbeni, and Montepulciano and Pienza, and the little cities of the Sanese dim in heat, I scrambled down and took to the road which leads at last to the railway. Following this winding way for some two *chilometri*, I came at last to the little chapel called Madonnina, and turning there to the left followed the mule path up into the woods, past Podere Casella, through Podere Belvedere to Vivo, among the waters in the shadow of green trees. It is a little village full of the sound of running water, set on a hillside in the woods.

Across the stream, full and clear and sweet, from which Siena now gets all her water, rises the great villa-palace of the lords of this place, the Conti Cervini, who had it from a Pope long and long ago. For it seems that Vivo owes her origin to a Hermitage of Camaldolese monks, who named the place after these living waters that still gush forth clear and full even in the summer heat. The Hermitage was dedicated to S. Benedict, and, as it is said, was founded first in the eleventh century, when the Emperors, Henry I., in 1003, and Frederick I. later, in 1166, conceded to it many privileges.

About 1337, however, "on account of some pastures," the Salimbeni, lords of Castiglione d'Orcia, caused "their vassals" to attack the Hermitage of Vivo, and devastated and robbed it, so that the monks were compelled to seek refuge in the monastery of the Rose, belonging to their Congregation in Siena: and to that house, later, was given the patrimony of Vivo, with that of Badia di Campo, in Val d'Orcia, until it was alienated to the Farnese Princes, and sold by Pope Paul III. of that House to Cardinal Cervini, later Pope Marcello II., who left it to his nephews and

descendants, who have always held it, since 1701, with the title of Count granted them by Grand-Duke Cosimo III.

It is not, however, for the memory of a spoiled hermitage that one comes to-day to Vivo, but for the joy and sweetness on a summer's day in Tuscany of those living waters which run so swiftly through the place under the trees, sometimes in great waterfalls and cascades that make a thunder in the woods, sometimes almost silently over the stones, but always with a song. Lying there in the long afternoon, that is so loath to go, the history of the place comes back to one, and means how much less than the trembling gold of the sun that stains those living waters and will fade at evening, the murmur of the wind among the trees saying who knows what, passing who knows whither. . . .

You may go all the way by the woods, if you will, from Vivo to Abbadia S. Salvatore, and in many a solitary place spy suddenly the whole Sienese *contado*, with Siena herself, white against the mountains, spread out before you. Perhaps as you pass by they will be cutting the corn on the verge of the woods, or on a

beaten platform of the earth be wielding the flail, singing in chorus. And you will stop, maybe, to talk with them, supping their wine—the yellow wine of the lower slopes of the Mountain—talking of harvest. The grain is good, you will hear, very like; and the straw, you learn, the yellow straw, more golden than wine, more beautiful than fine gold, is for Val d'Arno, for Livorno, for Lastra and Signa, where they make hats for such a lordship as yourself. And the grain, too, is it not sent to the valley there, the broad valley of Arno, to be sown again, and yield fruit and stalk; and of that the finest hats are made—yes, such as your lordship's self might in Italy, at least, not disdain to wear. And thinking of their hard, simple, and yet so serene lives, spent 'twixt the woods and the fields, you watch them load the ass with his golden burden, a sheaf on this side, a sheaf on that, and another and another and another, till all that appears under the golden burden is a tired, placid head, a drooping tail, and four honest sure feet for the steep, rough road home. And singing as they go, the youngest leading the ass—half in pride, half for support—they leave you on the Mountain, alone and not alone, for

there, though the ways are solitary, there is no loneliness, and though the paths be rough you cannot be weary in the hearing of many voices, while the flowers make sweet the road.

IX

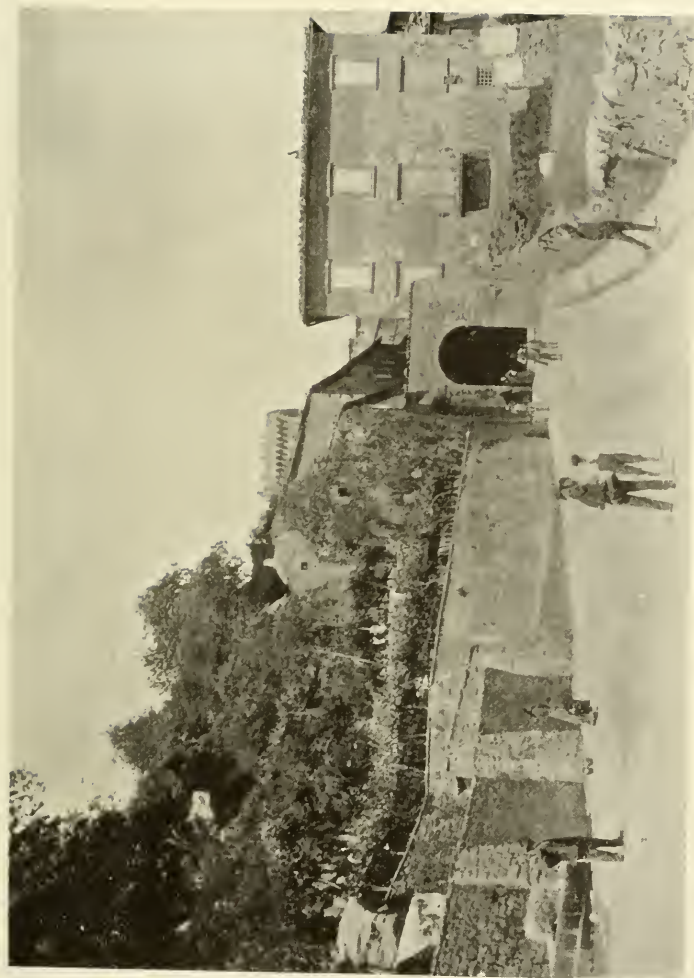
PIAN CASTAGNAJO

THE way, the old way, from Abbadia to Pian Castagnajo, whose towers one sees from the hillside above S. Salvatore over the trees, lies all the way through the woods, in the silence, out of the sun. You may go, if you will, by the new road, with its views over the valley of the Paglia, southward to Viterbo, almost to Rome, so tragic and lonely in the light of early morning; but if you are content to go afoot, and indeed it is but a short four miles, you will prefer, as I did, to follow that old paved, mediæval road through the forest, forsaken now, about to be lost in the woods, to be overwhelmed by the flowers, and finding your way, sometimes not without hesitation, scrambling down the steep banks of those dry torrents which its broken bridges no longer span, come out at last to the little chapel in the wood, La Madonna di S. Pietro, where, if

you are so fortunate, on a still, dry day you may sometimes hear, even yet, children's voices chanting the litany of Our Lady—

“Mater Purissima
Mater Castissima
Mater Inviolata
Ora pro nobis.”

Pian Castagnajo is a little walled and fortified village, built on the hillside, in the arms of the forest. When we first hear of it, as early as 890, it is already in the possession of the monks of Abbazia S. Salvatore, and is called Casal Piano. From about the year 1100 the Aldobrandeschi seem continually to have disputed with the monks certain rights in the place, nearly always, it might seem, to be beaten. And then suddenly we find that the Friars Minor, the Franciscans, are already there, and anxious about the consecration of a church, S. Bartolommeo al Pian Castagnajo, and that is only the second time we hear of the name the place bears to-day, the first being in a document some fifteen years earlier. About this time the Bishop of Sovana, and of that place the Aldobrandeschi were counts, seems to have put in a claim to ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The real state of the case is perhaps



PLAN CASTAGNAJO

revealed by a letter of the Emperor Frederic II., under date of 27th August 1244, to his Captain General in Tuscany, Pandolfo da Fasianella, in which he cites the Visconti of Campiglia and the Aldobrandeschi Counts of Sovana as usurpers in Monte Nero, and in Pian Castagnajo, of the rights of the Abbey and monks of Mont' Amiata. Repetti cites the letter, which goes on to say that these nobles must appear before the end of sixty days in the Court Imperial, to produce legal evidence of their rights, and to explain their actions against the monks. In 1247, the Visconti, who seem to have been the worse aggressors, were condemned to restore the Castello of Pian Castagnajo and its district to the Abbey under a penalty of 140 Pisan lire. The Visconti appealed to the court of second instance, and again were beaten; the decision being given against them at S. Quirico in the following year, when they were declared to be feudatories of the Abbey of S. Salvatore. After further trouble, on the 9th May 1249, Abbot Manfred promised, in the name of the Badia and of its Chapter, to invest the brothers Federigo and Pepone, sons of Jacopo Visconti, citizens of Siena, with the feud of Pian Castagnajo, with its *curia*, juris-

diction and district. In the July following the Visconti acknowledged the Abbot as their feudal Signor, and swore fealty to him.

Politically the inhabitants of Pian Castagnajo were at this time under the government of the Republic of Orvieto, while civilly the village had been now under the Aldobrandeschi, now under the monks, or the monks' feudatories the Visconti. But towards the end of the thirteenth century the Aldobrandeschi of Sovana seized the place. This branch of the Aldobrandeschi came to an end in 1284, and their universal heir was Countess Margherita, the only daughter of Ildebrandino. She had married in her father's lifetime Conte Guido di Monteforte. We have seen the struggle the monks had with the Visconti for possession of Pian Castagnajo; the same fight occurs again with di Monteforte. In 1286, Pope Honorius iv. gave commission to Simone da Castel-Gandolfo, his chaplain, to examine the quarrel between the monks and Conte Guido and Contessa Margherita for possession of the Castello. The result of the lawsuit, if it is not clearly on the side of the monks in temporal affairs, confirms their spiritual jurisdiction. Beaten perhaps in the struggle for

temporal power, the monks, Regulars as they were, were now attacked in their spiritual rule by the secular Bishop of Sovana. On the 1st December 1349 a compromise was arrived at, the Bishop and the monks agreeing to accept as arbitrator Pietro, *pievano* of Proceno.

In the division of the Contea Aldobrandesca, between Aldobrandino di Bonifazio of Santa Fiora and Aldobrandino di Guglielmo of Sovana, which happened in December 1274, Pian Castagnajo fell to the share of the latter. Later it passed as a marriage portion into the family Gaetani, who in 1314 granted it as a feud to the Monaldeschi of Orvieto, from whom it passed, we know not how or why, into the possession of the Piccolomini, and so into the power of the Sienese Republic.

In 1352 Pian Castagnajo rebelled, but the Republic sent a body of troops thither under the command of Francesco Accarigi, who speedily recovered it. Another rebellion followed in 1355 on the fall of the *Nove*; Pian Castagnajo being among the towns of the *contado* which refused to obey the *Dodici*. It continued in revolt till 1360, when it was reduced by the *Dodici* and given by them to

the Salimbeni—that was in October 1368. The rule of the Salimbeni was, however, of the shortest; for the Sieneſe being fully occupied in ſuppreſſing civic ſedition, in the following year Niccolò Orſini, Count of Nola and Captain of the Papal troops, occupied it by force of arms. The Orſini held it till 1378, in which year they recognised the ſuzerainty of Siena. During the war with Ladislaus of Naples, Sforza da Cotignola made himſelf maſter of Pian Caſtagnajo. The Sieneſe ſent Franceschino della Mirandola, their general, againſt him, but in vain; becauſe when he ſaw that Sforza intended to defend the place, Franceschino turned back without attempting anything. As they had done with the Orſini in 1378, ſo now they did with Franceschino Sforza in 1414, granting him all the *caſtelli* and the towns and villages which he had occupied in Val d'Orcia on condition that he held them as fiefs granted him by the Republic and paid the uſual *cenſi*. When his preſtige was diminished by the arreſt of his uncle Sforza da Cotignola, the Sieneſe loſt no time in ſending Goro Catosti and Andreoccio Mercolindi with an army to reconquer the places which Sforza had occupied. The city of Chiuſi, the *caſtelli* of Monte Nero, Rocca

d'Orcia, and Monte Giovi submitted, and when the army drew near to Pian Castagnajo the lieutenant of Sforza at once capitulated on receiving the sum of 2000 florins.

A little later, in 1416, Sforza also consented to accept 18,000 florins for the abandonment of his claims to the territories thus taken from him. So the inhabitants of Pian Castagnajo returned to the allegiance of the Republic, and remained under her protection as *accomandati* till 1440. In that year they decided to submit themselves more completely, that they might live with a securer freedom.

In 1601, however, Grand Duke Ferdinando I. gave the place in feud to General Giovan Battista Bourbon, of the Marchesi del Monte, to pass to his descendants in the male line, and in some sort this family held the place almost to our day.

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If you come to Pian Castagnajo by the old road through the woods, you cross the Indovina, a dry torrent-bed in summer, but in spring generally raging with the waters of the snows, so that by this, if there be much water or little, the *contadini* divine the richness or poverty of the harvest. The first sign that

you are approaching the Castello is the chapel of Madonna in the Wood, Madonna di S. Pietro, one of the most ancient churches of the Mountain; while if you come by the new road, you pass on the left, half a mile almost before you come to the gate, the church and convent of S. Bartolommeo, founded originally in 1227 by the Friars Minor, though not in this same spot; set here, however, in 1278, nearer, as Wadding tells us, than the old convent was to the Castello and under the patronage of the Counts of Pitigliano. A mere ruin now, the convent of S. Bartolommeo contains nothing of interest save a beautiful, spoiled cloister, while the church, like that of Madonna in the Wood, is full of the improbable, incredible fustian of to-day. From these churches it is but a short quarter of a mile to the gate at the foot of the old fortress of the place, which bears still many a broken coat of arms, among them the *Balzana* of Siena. Before this ruined *fortezza* on either side is a plain, a *piano* of chestnuts, like the groves of rival deities, very still and solemn, and always full of silence. From the fortress east and south the old walls of the Castello still totter round the shrunken, precipitous village, in many a ruined, battle-

mented tower, and there, looking southward down Val di Paglia, is the Porta del Borgo.

It is not, however, anything within the Castello that will really interest us, though the place is full of picturesque corners and steep, precipitous streets, and the parish church of S. Maria Assunta is among the oldest on the Mountain, but the palace which General Giovan Battista Borbone del Monte built two years after Grand-Duke Ferdinand gave him the place. It is a building like a Roman palace, a Roman palace in a country place, without the exaggeration and grandiosity of some of those great seventeenth-century houses in Rome. And then it has a garden too, ruined now, and a little bare and forlorn in its rugged wildness, among the enormous stones that once were carved into a fantastic beauty, hewn into strange shapes which the wind and the rain are slowly obliterating, turning what was once just rock back into rock again. *Il Mugnello*, they call the place, laughing still a little uncannily, with so many waters, waters that have broken their banks and found new ways for themselves, running hither and thither out of the sun. And long and long ago gay with the del Monte ladies, in the beautiful dresses of the

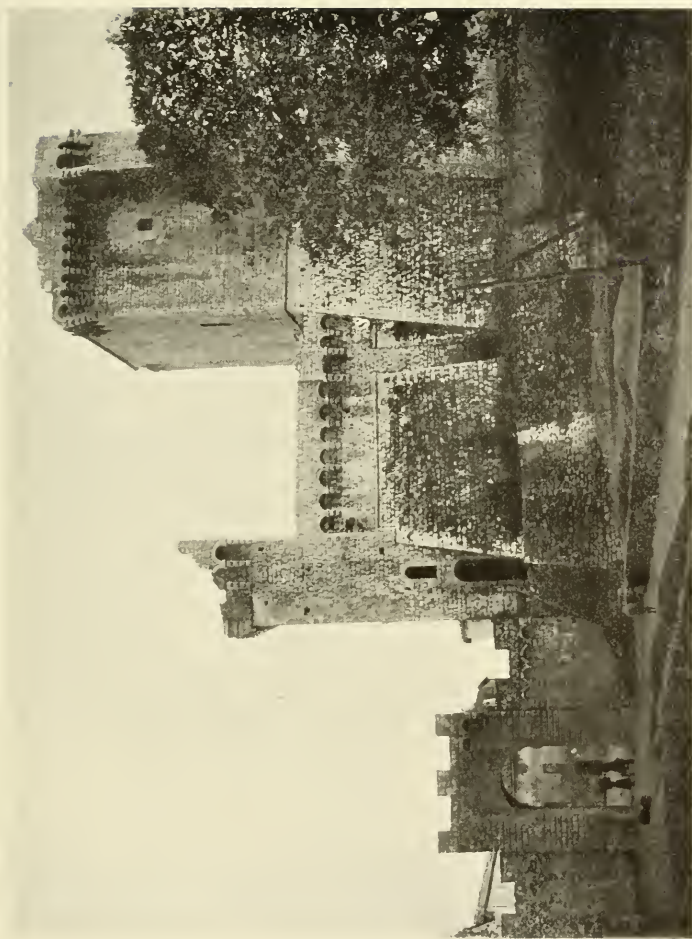
time, it must have been a pleasant place enough, rivalling certainly the garden of the Sforza-Cesarini of Santa Fiora. There were arbours and grottos, little stairways hewn out of the rock, winding about a waterfall, and in the midst a great rough-hewn fountain, like a huge shell, big enough for all those ladies to bathe in together, as in the pleasant pages of Boccaccio, and the water there is fresh and pure and colder than chastity herself.

Lying there in the shadow all through a drowsy summer afternoon, one seems to see those dear dead ladies—

“Girls of mild silver and of furious gold”—

sauntering by, reading, what but Tasso's *Aminta* perhaps, or the immortal *Gerusalemme* in the Aldine Edition of 1582, for in this country-place we are still a little behind the times. Messer Lorenzo Bartoli from Rome, in *villeggiatura* here, seems to have much to say to the divine Madonna Laura on that interesting subject of Tasso's immortality; while not far away Madonna Rosa trembles a little, laughing the while at the eager, hot words of young Sforza-Cesarini, the scapegrace; and Madonna Beatrice gazes a little pensively from the arbour, ever towards Rome. This very

PIAN CASTAGNAJO



morning, it seems, a wild boar caught near the Ermetta has been taken alive and brought into Pian Castagnajo, and this evening the gentlemen are to bait it in the courtyard, in honour of the guest, no less than the Grand Duke's Grace herself. And after there will be a concert, *concerto campestre*, under the chestnuts. Hark! I can hear the low fingering of the guitar strings, the golden Beatrice is about to sing—ah! that sad song of hers—

“*Fiorin di grano
Lasciatemi contar' chè allegra sono
Ho rifatto la pace col mio damo.*”

But what is this I hear? It is a *stornello* of the Mountain,—ah! that has outlived Tasso's Sonnets. I must have been really asleep. It is a *contadina* of the village who sings, as she carries her snowy linen from the fountains of the del Monte gardens, where all the afternoon she has been at the *lavatoio*. It is already evening, and time to return. As I follow her through the narrow, steep, winding ways, I turn at last at Porta del Borgo and wait in the last light of the sunset. Standing there at evening, gazing over the near vineyards and the woods to Proceno, to Bolsena, to Monte Cimino, and Monte Venere, I cannot remember that I am

still in Tuscany. There is a light on the hills that one may never see in any Tuscan land, a largeness in the evening earth, something passionate, solemn, and splendid in the gesture and form of every valley and mountain. Do I dream still, I ask myself, or is there in that tawny and lonely country some buried greatness, some unforgettable renown that has now uttered in my heart the immortal word—Rome?

X

THE ALDOBRANDESCHI

EARLY on the next morning I set out from Pian Castagnajo for Santa Fiora. And at first the way led through the forest: then when it had left the Madonna of the Wood behind, it came out suddenly on to the hillside towards Castellazzara caught in the mist, towards Bolsena hidden under the morning sun, and Monte Cimino and Rome. But it was not any ancient splendour that came to me, scarcely awake as yet, weary of the waning pride of the long summer, but a dim, fantastic, intricate memory out of the Middle Age, full of cruelty, oppression, and wrong; the clash of iron on iron, the voices of barbarian princes. And yet, who may deny the force and splendour of the House of Aldobrandesca?

Where they came from, how and when they entered Italy, no man knows. Perhaps they

were Longobard princes, perhaps they came with Charlemagne ; but being come somehow, somewhen, overwhelmed perhaps, as all the barbarians have been, by the mystery and beauty of this land, they stayed and worked their will.

In the latter half of the twelfth century, when the Communes, free at last from the dominion of the Bishops, began to threaten the feudal barons round about, the Aldobrandeschi were probably the most powerful lords in Tuscany. Their dominion included almost all Mont' Amiata and its villages, with the Maremma to the south of Ombrone. Grosseto, too, was theirs, and Campagnatico, and many another town and village to Radicondoli, Belforte, and Monteguidi. Their boast was that they possessed more fortified places than there are days in the year, and there can be but little doubt that that part of the modern Province of Siena and Grosseto which went to make up the Contea Aldobrandesca was far more populous then than it is now. Even the Maremma was not in those days the desolate region which it afterwards became ; the wild vines and olive trees upon its hills mark the spots which once were glad with



Giovanni della Robbia

COMMUNICATORIO
(Alinari)

Pieve, S. Fiora

vineyards and olive gardens, while the desolate ruins scattered over that country, the names lingering still of vanished towns and castles, the all too ample space enclosed within the walls of shrunken villages, speak to us of the prosperity that was of old, the poverty of to-day. And truly once upon a time Grosseto could put into the field three thousand fighting men, more than the total number of her citizens of both sexes and all ages in the middle of the nineteenth century. And in like manner Saturnia, Sovana, Telamone, Ansidonia and the rest, which to-day are scarcely more than names, were then little cities or villages of some importance.

The last of the Aldobrandeschi to rule over an undiminished and unbroken state was Ildeprando, or Aldobrandino, Count Palatine of Tuscany, who died in 1208. He left four sons, to wit, Aldobrandino the elder, sometimes called Aldobrandino Novello, Guglielmo, the "*gran Tosco*" of the Divine Comedy, Bonifazio, and Aldobrandino the younger. The first blow to their power had come from the eastward. The Orvietani, like the Sienese, were no longer satisfied with the destruction or subjection of the feudal fortresses in the

immediate neighbourhood of their walls, and both Communes realised the necessity of humbling the robber barons who dominated the vast tract of country which extended from the lower reaches of Paglia to the flanks of Mont' Amiata, from Argentario to Piombino, and along the crest of the hills between Montalcino and Montepulciano, embracing the lovely and secluded valleys of Merse and Ombrone. For either single-handed the task might have been impossible, but their common desire to avail themselves of the resources of the Maremma, and the necessity they were in of protecting and fostering the commerce already growing up between Rome and themselves and Northern Italy along Via Francigena, induced them, though Orvieto was Guelf and Siena Ghibelline, to unite together at least for this end. Accordingly, in 1202, they entered into an alliance, which they called *fraternitatem et unitatem*, and which was sworn to by the Podestà and a thousand of the citizens of Orvieto in that city in August, and by the Consuls and a thousand of the citizens of Siena in the Church of S. Cristofano in Siena in October. This alliance was to continue in force for twenty years, and by its terms the

Commune of Siena agreed to extend to the Orvietani all the privileges of citizenship, to exonerate them from all customs, and, in the event of war, to place at their disposal the *hostis* of Siena for fifteen days once a year, and 200 *milites* and 500 *pedites* twice a year. These obligations were of course reciprocal, the Orvietani promising to render the same services to the Sienese. In the following year, however, it was agreed in the Church of S. Andrea in Orvieto, and in the Palace of the Sons of Pietro di Cittadino Monaldeschi, that the Sienese might make peace with Count Aldobrandino at their good pleasure, but that if the Commune of Orvieto should make war on him for certain specified reasons, Siena should do the like. The Orvietani, too, about that time entered into an agreement with the Aldobrandeschi which was confirmed by an oath before the assembled people. The Counts undertook not to exact *pedagium* from the citizens within their Contea, and to redress such injuries as they might suffer therein; they agreed to make war or peace at the will of the Magistrates of the Commune, and to pay every Easter a tribute of 130 *libbre* in the money of Siena. Moreover, they paid a

sum of 600 *libbre* on the day of the agreement, in addition to 500 *libbre* for property which they had acquired in the city of Orvieto so that they might be citizens. And in return they were accorded full citizenship. Thus fell the barbarian lords before the Communes; but their end was not yet.

In 1212 the tribute was augmented, and in October 1213 the men of Sovana, who had already obtained a *statutum* from the Counts, requested and received permission to treat freely with Orvieto. Then in June 1216 they put themselves under the protection of Orvieto, and agreed that if the Signori should fail to observe the agreements sworn to they would take up arms against them at the command of the Commune.

In that same month Aldobrandino Novello, now head of the family, "desiring to obey all the orders of the Commune of Orvieto," gave and granted to that city *ad faciendam pacem et guerram et hostem et parlamentum*, all the territory which he possessed from Mont' Amiata to the Albenga, with the district of Corneto. Thus and thus the Aldobrandeschi were compelled to understand, not only that their days as absolute lords were over, but

that in less than fifteen years they had fallen from being allies of the Communes to a state of vassalage. Indeed, every town and village paid a tax or tribute of two *soldi* to the Commune for each family, and the Count himself was obliged to swear before the Magistrates of the City that the Commune should be his heir if he died without legitimate issue. Strange indeed must have been the scene when on the 24th June 1216, in the arid plain of Saturnia, in the presence of the people of Orvieto, the haughty Count Palatine was compelled to appear humbly before Monaldo di Pietro Cittadini, the representative of a new commercial aristocracy. "There met," as Rondoni says, "two generations, two races, two histories."

The so swift ruin of the Aldobrandeschi seems to have been largely due to dissensions between the brothers, for in the same year Orvieto, now mistress of the situation, undertook to adjust their differences. She compelled Aldobrandino, Bonifazio, Guglielmo, and Aldobrandino the younger to exchange the kiss of peace, and divided their entire Contea into four parts. This seems to have made them realise their position, for in addition to the

indignities they had suffered they were nearly ruined by the usurious demands of the rich Commune. At last, when payment was required, they retaliated by driving off cattle and committing other thefts. But they could not loosen the grasp which held them. In April and July 1219, and June 1222, they were compelled to enter into new conventions with new guarantees, while finally, in 1223 Aldobrandino the elder, Bonifazio, and Guglielmo became parties to a formal agreement whereby they undertook to satisfy all their obligations, only preserving to themselves the right of trial by battle "*per pugnam et camphyones*," in the case of such evidence and documents as they should aver to be false. They seem indeed to have had no alternative, since at the time of this convention Bonifazio and Guglielmo were held captive. Their only chance of regaining their liberty lay in the acceptance of any terms which might be offered them. In November 1223 the Procurator and Syndic of the Commune took formal possession of all the towns and villages which had been granted by Aldobrandino in 1216.

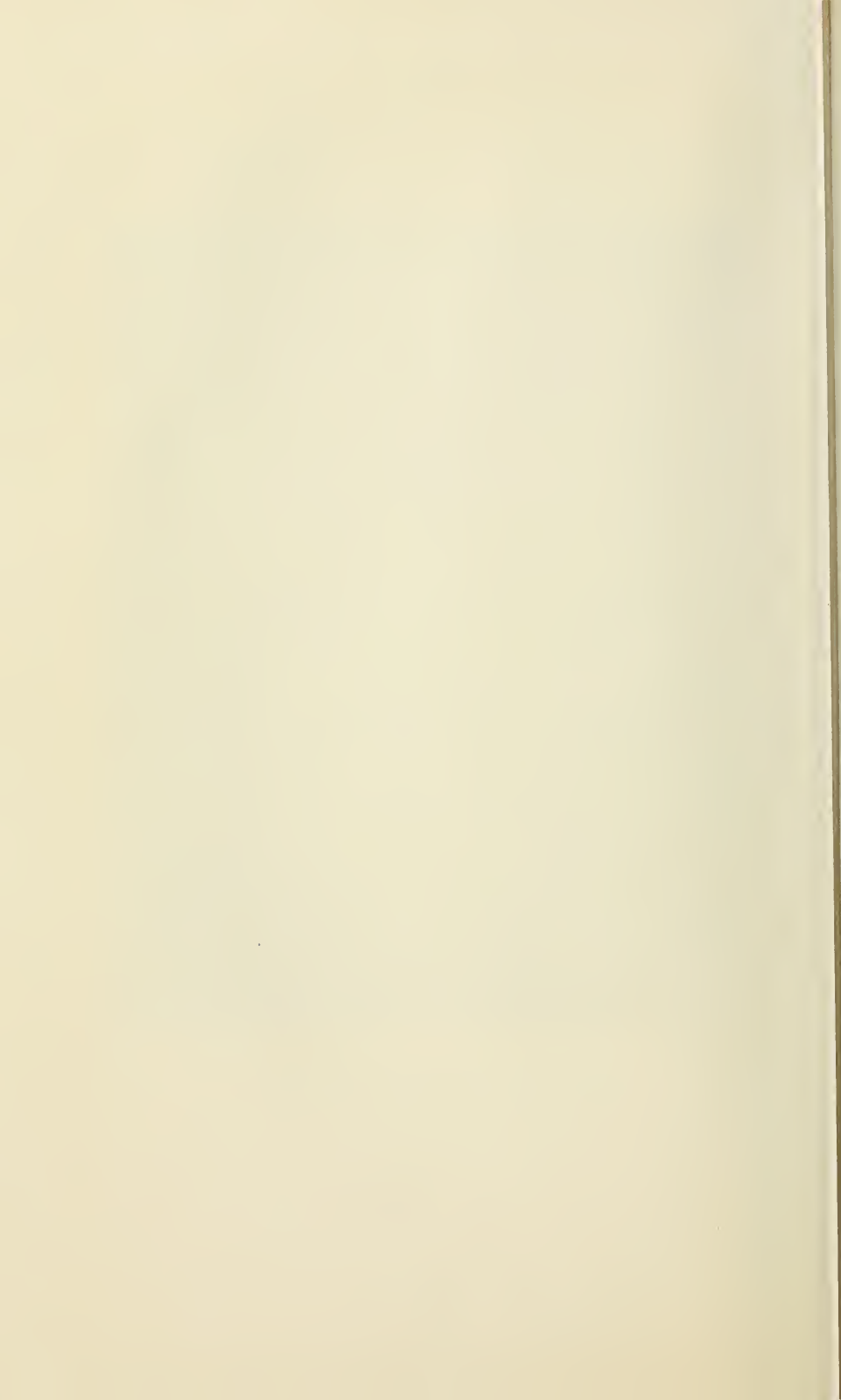
Throughout all these difficult transactions



Della Robbia

LA MADONNA DELLA CINTOLA
(*Atinavi*)

Pieve, S. Fiora



Orvieto seems to have been loyal to her treaty obligations with Siena, and indeed as long as friendship lasted between the two Communes the Aldobrandeschi were between the upper and nether millstones. Such a state of things, however, was not to continue. From 1228 to 1335 all Tuscany was in arms; the alliance between Guelph Orvieto and Ghibelline Siena was exchanged for enmity, and the Aldobrandeschi were able to recover a little of their former power.

On the 22nd November 1220 Frederick II. had been solemnly crowned by Pope Honorius III. in the Basilica of S. Peter, and in 1221 he had confirmed Aldobrandino Novello in his hereditary dignity of Count Palatine of Tuscany. In the same year, through the influence of the Imperial Vicar, Conrad, Bishop of Spire, the Aldobrandeschi entered into an alliance with the Sienese, the terms of which were equal and reciprocal, for each undertook to come to the assistance of other in case of war, with 1000 foot and 150 knights; but it was unequal in this, to wit, that the Counts agreed to pay to the Commune an annual tribute of twenty-five silver marks and promised that one of them, chosen by the Podestà or Consuls of

Siena, would reside in that city for one month in each year in time of peace and two in time of war.

In their dealings with Orvieto the Aldobrandeschi had been taught a severe lesson; they were most anxious to remove all cause of friction with the Sienese; possibly for this reason they gave Grosseto her liberty. For the inhabitants of that town adopted a systematic course of provocation towards Siena, heaping insults and injuries upon her and, against their promise (*contra promissam fidem*) exacting *passagium vel maltollectum* from her citizens who traded with them. Protest was useless; the Grossetani, declaring that the Sienese seemed to be ready rather to fly than to fight, treated all their complaints and menaces with indifference.

Now Siena had long coveted Grosseto, and the fact that it had received its independence removed it from among those places which by treaty she was bound not to annex. On the 24th August 1224, Count Guglielmo undertook to assist the Commune in reducing his former subjects to submission, promising to take up his residence in his palace in Grosseto. A few days later war was declared however.

“None ever saw fairer army,” we read. “The shields, the cuirasses, and the tents made bright the whole region round about, so that it seemed another Paradise.” Grosseto was taken by assault on the 8th September, the Birthday of the Blessed Virgin, “and those who went out against it were thirty-one hundred men, horse and foot: and when they had returned, for joy of the victory, they held high festival and lighted bonfires and closed the shops about the Campo.”

Notwithstanding the intercession of Count Guglielmo, the victors imposed hard conditions of peace. The Grossetani were compelled to swear, among other things, that they would never restore the walls of their city without the leave of Siena.

Although outwardly the Aldobrandeschi acquiesced in the action of the Sienese, they were secretly far from content, and continued to cherish a grievance which they were only too ready to take vengeance for whenever the Commune was in difficulties. Thus in 1236 Count Guglielmo, who perhaps had other more personal reasons for hating the Sienese, not only appealed to the Pope to force them to rebuild the walls of Grosseto, but seems even

to have succeeded in procuring their excommunication. Two years later he openly sided with their greatest enemies, and became a citizen of Florence. Thereupon the Sienese invaded the Contea Aldobrandesca, and took Montiano, Collecchio, and Magliano, between Ombrone and Albenza; while, later on, the brief period of Ghibelline domination in Florence, which followed the rising of the Uberti (20th January 1249), gave them an opportunity to deal a fatal blow to the power of the Aldobrandeschi.

Already in 1234 Siena had taken Campiglia d'Orcia by storm, leading the inhabitants prisoners to Siena, and now in January 1251 she sent her army down into Maremma, compelling the Signori of Torniella, Montorgiale, and Cinigliano to renounce their allegiance to the Counts and to accept the suzerainty of the Commune. With Montiano, Magliano, and Collecchio in her hands she thus possessed a line of fortresses from Siena to Telamone, which, beside securing to her the sea-coast from Castiglione to Monte Argentario, cut off the Aldobrandeschi from their lands and vassals beyond the Ombrone. She next ascended Val d'Orcia and seized Castiglione d'Orcia and

Selvena, thereby placing herself in a position to overrun at any moment the whole Contea Aldobrandesca. To escape worse evils Aldobrandino of Santa Fiora, the son of Count Bonifazio, hastened to Siena and sued for peace, obtaining conditions which were not too grievous.

Meantime, however, while the Sienese troops were yet in the Maremma, the Guelf exiles returned to Florence, and in March Count Guglielmo and his sons Aldobrandino "the Red," and Umberto of Campagnatico renewed upon oath the convention of 1203 with the Commune of Orvieto, promising to observe all the promises he had there made, save, of course, "to reverence and honour the Commune of Siena." In April they entered into a fresh convention with Florence, whereby they granted her the use of their ports and especially Telamone and Port' Ercole.

This treaty was a great source of danger to Siena. Already by the submission of 1216 Orvieto had acquired suzerainty over the valley of Albenga; and now, if Florence were permitted to obtain free access to Telamone or Port' Ercole a few years would probably see her mistress of the Maremma; Grosseto would

be lost, and Siena must from thenceforward be contented to become an inland state hemmed in on every side by the territories of her bitterest foes. War followed, and, as in 1229, the whole of Tuscany was divided into two hostile camps. Success crowned the arms of Florence, and the Sienese *contado* was devastated up to the very gates of the city, but the Florentines seem to have abandoned their designs upon Telamone, and although Campiglia was restored to the Visconti, and other fortresses to other Signori, the peace of 1254 left the Aldobrandeschi still shorn of much of their former strength. Count Guglielmo seems to have died early in the following year.

Hardly had hostilities ceased, however, when the Sienese wished to take vengeance on those who, whether in Maremma or in the mountains, had taken the part of the Aldobrandeschi against them. They besieged and took Pian Castagnajo; they compelled the Signori of Monte Orsaia, of Fornoli, and of Cinigliano, to make submission to the Republic, and the lords of Toraniella, having revolted, they stormed and destroyed their fortress, carrying such of them as were not slain prisoners to Siena. The populace clamoured



SANTA FIORA



for revenge, and in the *Consiglio della Campana* of the 30th August 1255 demanded that the hands and feet of the rebels should be cut off and their eyes torn out. The aristocrats of the Assembly resisted, but the people were unwilling to yield, and the discussion turned upon the question whether the Torniellesi should lose one eye or both, one hand or both, or whether it would not be better to hang them all out of hand and so finish the business. Finally, milder counsels prevailed, but not from any lack of savagery on the part of the *Popolani*, for whom the mangling of those luckless gentlemen would have been a pleasant holiday diversion.

The Aldobrandeschi were naturally not unmoved spectators of these proceedings. The increasing power of the Commune in the Maremma was a distinct menace to their power, and in spite of the stipulations of the Peace they believed that they had good cause for apprehension. Therefore they applied to the Florentines, and through them demanded of the Sienese whether they entertained any hostile intentions against the sons of Count Guglielmo or against their dominion. On the 4th September 1255 the Sienese replied in the

negative, and then on the 5th of February following, Graziano, *judex* and ambassador for the Commune of Siena, demanded of the noble Counts Umberto and Aldobrandino, sons of the late Count Guglielmo, whether they were willing to abide by and observe the terms of the Peace made with the Sienese by the Commune of Florence, for herself and for them; and they answered, Yes, they were. But mutual suspicions did not cease for all that.

In the following year Aldobrandino of Santa Fiora thought it safer to disassociate himself from his kinsmen and to enter into negotiations for a separate peace, renewing the submission of 1251. To him on the 25th of December 1256 the Commune sent ambassadors, to confer and to negotiate with him. The ambassadors, however, were unable to perform their errand, for Umberto, who was bitterly opposed to his cousin's action, and regarded any conventions and agreements to the advantage of the Commune as a means of despoiling him and his family of their hereditary dominions, laid an ambush for the envoys and cast them into prison, absolutely refusing to give them up unless, and until, the Commune should set the sons of Ranieri da Torniella at

liberty. Before openly treating with him the Sienese, mindful of the peace sworn, sent ambassadors to Florence, Perugia, Orvieto, and Viterbo, to make formal complaint touching the injuries done them, and especially to lay stress upon the very grievous wrong involved in laying hands upon the sacred persons of ambassadors. Moreover, they pointed out that, by reason of the robberies of the Count, the road to Maremma was so dangerous as to be indeed useless. Their representations, however, produced no effect, and Umberto continued in his lawless ways *contra Deum et institiam*, until at last their patience was altogether exhausted and they resolved to abate him as a common nuisance. His end is recorded by Dante in the eleventh canto of the *Purgatorio*—

“Io fui latino, e nato d'un gran Tosco !
Guglielmo Aldobrandesco fu mio padre :
Non so se il nome suo giammai fu vosco.
L'antico sangue e l'opere leggiadre
De' miei maggior' mi fêr sì arrogante
Che, non pensando alla commune madre
Ogni uomo ebbi in dispetto tanto avante
Ch'io ne mori', come i Sanesi sanno
E sallo in Campagnatico ogni fanti
Io sono Umberto . . .”

As to the precise manner of his death there are many different legends, for the facts (once

so well known that doubtless the allusion of the poet was perfectly clear to his contemporaries) were soon forgotten; and to-day, indeed, we cannot be certain whether he died miserably suffocated in his bed at the hands of hireling murderers, or fighting, sword in hand, as became a gallant knight. And even as Umberto is now but a dim memory, so it has fared too with the ancient Campagnatico where he died. A tower worn by age, masses of blackened stones and ruined walls which the ivy has covered with its darkness, are all that remain to us from the Middle Age of its strong fortress and its battlemented keep.

Although Count Aldobrandino of Santa Fiora and his cousin had been far from friends, none the less he resented the violence of his end, and for the moment, at any rate, his relations with the Sieneſe were strained almost to breaking point. Later, however, King Manfred reconciled him with the Commune, so that we find him commanding the *milites* of Siena at the battle of Monteperto, where his valour and address seem to have helped in no small degree to win that victory for the Ghibellines. Nor are the Sieneſe Chroniclers grudging in their praise—



IN S. FIORA OF THE ALDOBRANDESCHI

“Then came the gallant Count Aldobrandino,” says one of them, “with the standard bearers and all the people of Siena, shouting with one voice: *Alla morte! Alla morte!* The first to meet Count Aldobrandino was the Captain of the Orvietani, whose name was Messer Sinibaldo Rubbini, a man of great puissance, but it availed him nothing that day against the Captain of the Sienese, for the Count Aldobrandino thrust him through with his lance through all his armour so that it passed out behind between his shoulders: and hurled him to the earth from off his horse, dead. Then he took his sword in his two hands, and a sad man was he who waited his coming for his days on earth were ended. And so great was the fury of his onset that he who stayed for one of his blows had no need of another, nor did he seek a leech to heal him, for from one he lopped off an arm and from another his head, and so it befel all who came within his reach.”

Yet notwithstanding his splendid services on the most glorious day in Sienese history, the Commune had no mind to loose the bands with which they had bound him. For them the feudal nobles were fierce hounds to be held in leash, falcons only to be unhooded when the

quarry was in sight. So on the 28th October 1261, at the Bagni di Vignone, they compelled the Count to renew his submission of 1251, and to promise to pay all arrears of tribute and all the debts which he had incurred in Siena. He further promised to finish the palace he had begun to build on Poggio de' Malavolti, and to reside there for the period agreed upon in each year.

In 1274 the Contea Aldobrandesca was divided between the cousins, and henceforward Aldobrandino, the son of Bonifazio, ruled in Mont' Amiata with Santa Fiora as his capital, and Aldobrandino, "the Red," in Maremma. The latter House soon became extinct ; as I have said, he left one daughter, whom he gave in marriage to that Guy de Montfort who in 1271

"fesse in grembo a Dio
Lo cor che in sul Tamigi ancor si cola."
(*Inferno*, xii. 119-120.)

After the death of her father and husband Margherita ruled alone, with the title of Countess Palatine. Although her capital was Sovana she seems generally to have resided at Saturnia. Her daughter Anastasia married Guido degli Orsini.

The Aldobrandeschi of Santa Fiora, however, flourished for more than a hundred and fifty years, and continued to be a thorn in the side of the Sienese for the greater part of the fourteenth century. Their loyalty to the Commune, never very enthusiastic we may think, ceased altogether with its abandonment of the Ghibelline cause, and Santa Fiora became a typical home of feudal lawlessness. From 1280 to 1300, and again in 1331, the Counts were at war with Siena; and with Ghinozzo da Sassoforte from 1328 to 1330.

Count Jacomo when he died at Santa Fiora in 1346 bequeathed, Andrea Dei tells us, all his goods to the Commune of Siena; "and this he did because he said that all which he possessed, or the greater part thereof, he had taken and robbed in the *contado* of Siena, and he had given asylum in his dominions to those who had robbed the *contado* of Siena and the citizens of Siena." Such facts enable us to understand the meaning of Dante's despairing appeal to "German Albert"—

"Vien' crudel vieni, e vedi la pressura
De' tuoi gentili, e cura lor magagne
E vedrai Santaflor com' è sicura."

(*Purgatorio*, vi. 109-111).

Indeed the strong fortress of Santa Fiora was

filled with outlaws, bloody and violent men who acknowledged no law whether human or divine save only the commandment of their lord. Who can forget the terrible legend of Giovagnolo, that brutal retainer of the Aldobrandeschi, who caused an hundred prisoners at one time to be slain by a weak old man, leading them to their death one after another with their hands tied behind their backs so that he might better feast his eyes upon their agony and fear. Was it not this cruelty which, as the pious old Sienese monk says, was the cause of the downfall of that proud House?

The end of Giovagnolo was worthy of his life, for even on his deathbed he steadfastly refused to bow his brute neck to God Himself, declaring with his latest breath that he was minded if he recovered to be revenged upon such of his enemies as were yet alive. Mr. Heywood translates the sorry tale with a true feeling for the indomitable pluck and persistence of this devil in his *Ensamles of Fra Filippo*. For "when the Prior of the Place came to him to confess him he said that he desired not to confess because he had committed so many sins that God would never pardon him, and also because he had committed



THE PESCHIERA, S. FIORA

many sins of which he could never repent. . . .
'Also (said he) I have so many enemies in the other life who will rise up against me that, if God desired to pardon me, it would be almost beyond His power to do so. For of a truth three mules would not suffice to carry the hoods alone of the men whom I have slain. Think you then how could I make my peace with Him? I know that He would never receive me into His mercy, nor am I willing so to abase myself as to show myself fearful of Him. Well I wot that He would never trust Himself in my hands; much less would I trust myself in His.' And after this manner, with these and other like desperate words, he declared that he would in no wise confess. Very much did the Confessor speak to him of the immeasurable mercy of God, of the glory of the blessed and of the tortures of the damned; and his wife likewise and other friends of his that were there besought him to confess and to prepare his soul; but they could not change his accursed determination. And even as the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, so did his heart grow harder. And ever he spoke desperate words whereby he deemed that he convinced every man that in reason he

ought neither to confess nor to make his peace with God and with the saints. . . . And so that wretched soul passed from this life.

“Now when he was dead, the Counts desired that he should be buried in the Church of the Friars of S. Agostino, hard by their own sepulchre, for they had loved him well. Thereupon the Friars offered many excuses to the end that they might not be compelled to bury him either in their church or in any part of the place; saying that he had been a devil in human form, and that his body ought to be buried in a ditch with dogs and not with men. But the Counts, who had built that church from its foundations, were determined that in spite of everything the corpse should be buried in the church. Wherefore the Friars, fearing the Counts more than God, consented to that which the Counts willed. And, that accursed body having been buried in the church, for three nights thereafter there was in the church such tumult and tempest that not only among the Friars but also among those who dwelt round about no man might close his eyes to sleep, because it seemed that the church was full of devils, as in good sooth it was. And anon they seemed knights who jousting; anon men

who fought sword in hand; and anon very fierce beasts madly hurtling together with dolorous bellowings. And so for three whole nights that tempest ceased not in the church; and at noontide also these sounds were heard, but not so loudly. And not only did no man dare to enter the church during those three nights, but also, for divers months thereafter no man dared to enter therein unless he had been assoiled and was in good company. On the third day the Friars, with certain laymen, confessed and prepared in their souls, went to the church and dug up that accursed body and buried it in the garden beside the river; whereupon that tumult ceased and was no more heard."

Such were the men who harried Mont' Amiata from end to end, and it was not the highways only that were insecure because of them, but the less strongly fortified villages too—these were sacked and held to ransom, crops were cut down and cattle driven off. Even the monks of Abbadia did not escape their violence. And for this cause in October 1346 the Abbot "in the Consiglio della Campana of the Commune consigned and gave the Castello dell' Abbadia," as Andrea Dei reminds us, "to

the Commune of Siena because he was expelled from his Monastery by the sons of Count Arrigo of Santa Fiora who held the said Castello."

But desperate as was the condition of Mont' Amiata during the latter part of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth, matters gradually improved ; and it might seem just possible that the subjects of the Counts had no great reason to envy their neighbours, for it may well be doubted if the rural population was in fact any better off under the Communes than under the feudal lords. Indeed the whole policy of the Communes towards the country districts was one of ruthless exploitation for the benefit of the cities, and inevitably resulted, as the same policy has done in our own country, in the depopulation of the former.

The Aldobrandeschi House came to an end with Count Guido, who died early in the fifteenth century without male issue. He left three daughters ; the eldest of these, Donna Cecilia, married Bosio, son of Muzio Sforza Attendola da Cotignola, of whom more presently.

XI

SANTA FIORA

AS you come to Santa Fiora to-day from Pian Castagnajo or Arcidosso by the great winding road which girdles the whole Mountain, you see it, impregnable as it might seem, still towering over the valley of the Fiora. And, indeed, to reach it you must leave the highway and scramble down a steep, rough road that enters the Castello at last only through the courtyard of its Signori, passing, as you must, under the palace of the Cesarini, the successors of the Sforza, who in the fifteenth century entered into the Aldobrandeschi lordship. Gazing on the place, on the Rocca itself, thus, from the head of this violent approach, little or nothing might seem to be left of the Aldobrandeschi Rocca save an old tower rising high above the modern palace—a building of the Cesarini in the seventeenth century—dominating everything even yet in a fierce and

ruthless gesture of cruelty and scorn. It is under the turret of this tower, through the iron gateway of the fortress of its lords, that you enter or leave Santa Fiora even to-day, so impregnable is it, and Dante's words are then never far from your mind—

“Vedrai Santa Fior com' è sicura.”

Once within the walls, having passed under the gateway where the old guard used to sit, that devil Giovagnolo among them, you come into the great Piazza spread out before the palace, overlooked and dominated by it, its ironed windows gazing a little cynically, perhaps, all day long upon that emptiness where all men passed shyly and with a certain quickening of the heart. From there the village of Santa Fiora drops away suddenly down the hillside, as though in hiding, every byway and street thence leading downward over the abrupt brow of the hill. And, indeed, all these downward-sloping streets, broken continually by flights of steps, turning suddenly on themselves, afford many a view of the little place, its ancient houses and churches, SS. Fiora and Lucilla, S. Chiara, the suppressed convent of S. Agostino, where Giovagnolo was buried and so soon dug up and buried again “in the garden by the river.”



ROCCA OF S. FIORA, FROM WITHIN



And truly it is to that garden by the river you find yourself turning at every hour of the day in Santa Fiora.

Just without the Castello, towards Arcidosso, but in the valley far under the road, this garden lies full of shadows and a strange deep silence only broken by the bubbling of the waters that flow through the little gates of the fishpond to the river Fiora herself, "brawling her violent way to the sea," through a narrow, burnt, deserted valley that opens before the town. There, under the trees, are the beautiful fishponds, full of trout too, of the Cesarini, the overgrown byways of what was once a garden, but is now almost a wood, thick with creepers and wild-flowers, and pleasant, even on the hottest day, with the remembrance of rain. Lying there in the endless summer afternoon, your thoughts turn again to the story of the lords of this place, those Aldobrandeschi who left their honour and fortune at last, perforce, in the hands of a woman. Her name was Cecilia, heiress of Santa Fiora, and she married Bosio, brother of the great Francesco Sforza, and their son was that Francesco who, at the Court of Pope Alexander VI., was Orator of Milan. Thus the Sforza came to Santa Fiora.

Wandering in the late afternoon about the Castello, I came, in the Church of S. Fiora herself, upon their Blazon, the Lion rampant, with the Holy Flower of the Quince for Santa Fiora, but that shield was quartered with the arms of the Cesarini, their successors, that chequered Eagle which hovers there still, even to this day.

The Cesarini, who succeeded to the Sforza in this feud in the seventeenth century, were a Roman House of great wealth and distinction, claiming Cæsarian origin. They were allied with Pope Alexander VI. by the marriage in 1482 of the Pope's bastard Madonna Giroloma Borgia with Don Giovandrea Cesarini. The head of the family at that time was Don Gabriele Cesarini, *Gonfalonière* of Rome; his heir, Don Giangiorgio Cesarini, was already allied with the Sforza by marriage with Donna Maria Sforza di Guido di Santa Fiora.

The Cesarini, however, seem to have left but little mark upon the place. It is true that the present Palace is of their time, but the churches of the place, filled though they be with beautiful things, owe them not to the House of Cesarini, but to Bosio, the first of the Sforza counts.



Giovanni della Robbia

FONT
(Ulmari)

Pieve, S. Fiora

S. Fiora e S. Lucilla, the parish church, closes a little Piazza on one of the rare spaces of level ground in the Castello. Here, in this humble village church, under the shadow of the Aldobrandeschi tower, Andrea and Giovanni della Robbia and their pupils have left some of the delightful work which is the sunshine of the churches of Italy. And, indeed, what other village in all Italy is so rich in those beautiful blue and white terra-cottas? Under a round arch, set all with cool leaves and fruit, just within the door, is the Renaissance font; and over, set there by Giovanni, and indeed it is one of his finest works, the Baptism of Christ Himself, two Angels waiting eagerly beside Him, as with folded, delicate hands He stands in the waters of Jordan, while John Baptist, clothed in camel's hair, pours the water from a shell on to his forehead, and, above, the Dove hovers between the outstretched hands of God over the Beloved Son.

Half-way down the nave is the pulpit, covered on three sides with the work of the della Robbia School: in the midst is the Last Supper, where Our Lord communicates him who will betray Him, while S. John sleeps on His bosom, His arm about him, S. Peter

looks on, a little puzzled, and S. James, perhaps, hides his face. Then on the one side we see the Resurrection, where, between four watching, adoring Angels, Christ rises from the tomb, beside which the Roman soldiers (and these perhaps were portraits) lie sleeping in the dawn ; and on the other side, Christ ascends into heaven, while Madonna and the Apostles look sorrowfully into the sky, whence He blesses them.

Nor are these beautiful things the only work of that famous school in the church. Not far away is the *Comunicatorio* which Giovanni made, where God the Father, crowned among the Cherubim, blesses the consecrated Host, worshipped by two Angels leaning over the door of the Tabernacle. Two other altar-pieces, mere copies—spoiled copies too—of Andrea's most famous works, stand over two altars in the aisles. The one, in which we see the Assumption of Our Lady, while under, in three little panels, we find Christ among the Doctors, His Baptism and Deposition from the Cross is, a replica of Andrea's work at La Verna. Is it a replica of Andrea's work we see, or only of the Foiano copy of the La Verna altar-piece made by his pupils? At least there might



Della Robbia

THE LAST SUPPER, DETAIL OF PULPIT
(Altman)

Pieve, S. Fion

seem to be but little of Andrea's own design left in this adaptation, and though the principal figures certainly seem to be the work of Giovanni della Robbia, and, as has been pointed out, his influence is felt at least in the innovation of statuettes in the pilasters and crowded predella scenes, most of the execution is not exquisite enough to be from his hand, and must be called school work.

It is again a copy of Andrea's work we see in the altar-piece in three parts of the Coronation of Our Lady, with S. Francis receiving the Stigmata on one side, and S. Jerome in the wilderness on the other; while under are the Annunciation, the Adoration of the Shepherds, and the Adoration of the Magi. The entire work is indeed a copy of Andrea's beautiful work at S. Maria degli Angeli at Assisi, but the altar here was broader, and each scene was therefore made larger to fit it; the result is rather a failure, for the focus has been lost, and the whole composition suffers from a certain flatness and want of proportion, especially in the predella scenes.

One wanders from the convent of S. Chiara, founded in 1600 by the Countess Eleanora, daughter of Giovanni Orsini and wife of Count

Alessandro Sforza, Duke of Segni, where the Counts Sforza-Cesarini lie buried, to S. Agostino where Giovagnolo was buried, and where that tumult of devils caused his disinterment; and then, if one has time, it is delightful to pass by that stony way beside the Fiora in the valley to the Convent of S. Trinità on Monte Calvo, the convent in the wood—la Selva as they call the place—some three miles from Santa Fiora.

Indeed, you may drive perhaps half the way, but not many pass by, and the torrents of winter and spring, brawling down the northern slope of Monte Calvo into the Fiora, have made the road, strewn with their stones and refuse, impassable by any wheeled traffic, and it is only after a somewhat rough but very beautiful walk, passing at first through the rocky valley, and then climbing slowly the steep way to the wood on the hillside to the convent in the wood, that you may reach that lovely hidden place, so quiet and cool under the trees. It was evening as I returned on my mule from a long day in the mountains, that passing in the twilight along that stony road, a little fearful in my heart, perhaps, of "what men might do to me," that in a moment, between two



Della Robbia

THE RESURRECTION. DETAIL OF PULPIT
(Alinari)

Pieve, S. Fiora

heart beats, I heard those soft bells suddenly ringing the Angelus. For many days I could not forget the sound, till one hot afternoon it seemed to me that I must seek out that place, hidden among trees on the hillside, and yet so full of reassurance to those who pass by.

The sun lay on the world like a precious burden, the way was difficult, without the shade of trees or any respite from the heat. And, indeed, as I entered the woods at last and flung myself on the ground under the chestnuts, even I, who have loved the sun above all other things which God has made, was beaten at last, and in my head there shone a blood-red vision as of the Host in a monstrance of gold, before which I reeled in a kind of exhausted ecstasy. When at last I came to myself I found, not far away, a little fountain of water. And when I had bathed my head, I took heart, and in a little came suddenly upon the convent, in a glade of the forest, still and silent in the long afternoon. Entering into the church, whose door, shrouded by a heavy curtain, stood open to the traveller, in the coolness and the silence I refreshed myself, and presently, stealing alone about the place, I came upon the portrait in relief on the northern

pillar of the chancel arch of Don Bosio Sforza, founder of this place, as it seemed, carved there perhaps by one of the della Robbia. Under the portrait I read as follows :—

Guido Sfortia Bossii F.
 Sfortiadum dynastia
 Comes II. S. Florae
 A Nobilissima Matre
 Cæcilia Aldobrandesca
 Regionis Dominationem Acceptam
 Sapientia Rexit
 Bellica virtute Defendit
 Monumentum pietatis Reliquit
 Templum Hoc
 Coenobumq. instituendo
 Ditando quo condi
 Jussit A. MDVIII.

Yes, I knew, the line of the great Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, was extinct. The present House of Sforza-Cesarini descended from Don Bosio Sforza, Count of Santa Fiora from 1441 to 1476, brother of the great Francesco, and second son of Don Giovanni Muzio Attendolo *detto* Sforza. This was the man. Just then a footstep, so soft one might only just hear it, even in the silence, whispered on the threshold, and a little Friar came smiling toward me, and seeing me engaged in looking on the presentment of the Founder, stood silent a moment. Then he said, "Will the



Della Robbia

THE ASCENSION. DETAIL OF PULPIT
(*Alinari*)

Pieve, S. Fiora

Signore, hear other things concerning that great man?"

Well, the Signore was willing.

Then he led me to an altar in the south aisle, and not without a genuflection drew aside the curtain, and there I saw, in a mandorla of Cherubim, Our Lord hanging on the Cross between the sorrowful arms of God the Father, who, crowned with a triple crown, the Dove trembling in His bosom, held up tenderly the Sign of our Salvation, the Light of those who sit in darkness, the splendour of kings, the buckler impregnable, the safeguard of childhood, the strength of manhood, the last hope of the aged. And suddenly I felt on my shoulder the gentle hand of the Frate, and looking in his face I too knelt in silence there before the Salvation of the World. And later, a little shyly I thought, Fra Giovanni, for that was his name, led me into the sacristy, "A little poor place," he said, "such as we love." And by and by from a cupboard he drew forth the great relic of the convent, of which indeed I had heard, so famous is it, the skull of a Dragon slain in Maremma by Count Guido in 1499. Holding it delicately in his fingers, and turning it about and about as though a little embar-

rassed by a thing at once so precious and so hideous, he bade me read the inscription—

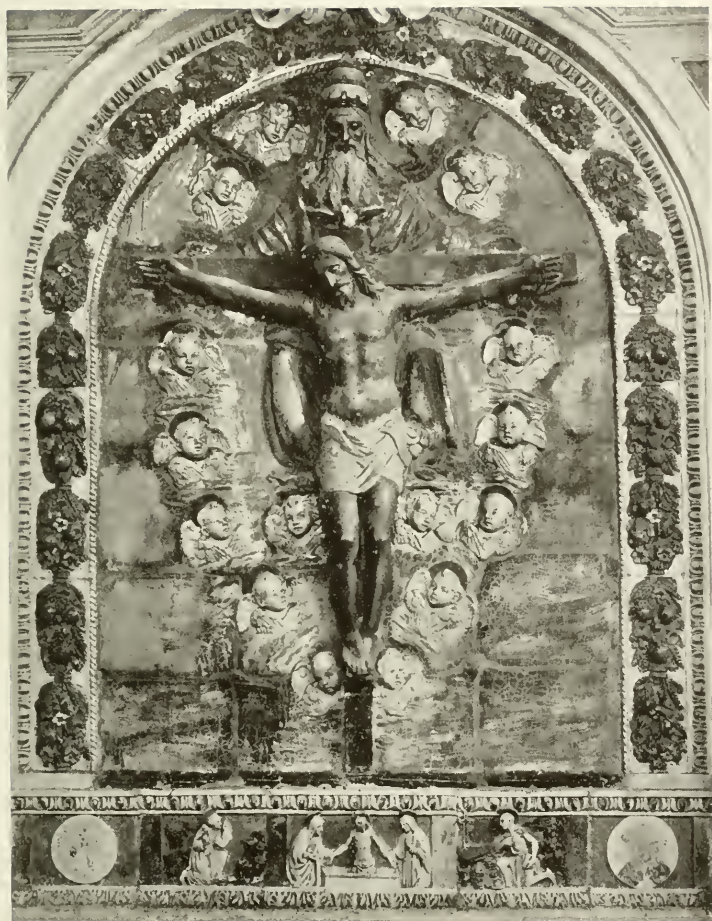
Guido dei Duchi Sforza Conte di S. Fiora
Nell' anno 1499 andando a caccia pre il bosco
Di questo Convento da lui fondato otto anni innanzi
I conontrossi con un orrendo mostro che uccise
Dopo preghiere innalzute alla SS. Trinità
In memoria del fatto lascio qui questa mezza testa
Mandando l' altra metà alla SS. Trinità de' Monte in Roma.

When I had finished I looked up; and Frate Giovanni smiled at me like a child, his eyes dancing, and turning the skull about again at arm's length, he said, "Truly, Signore, and I confess it at once, it seems to be the skull of an ass, but *Chi lo sa!* There were dragons perhaps, in those days, and it is so long ago, *è tanti anni fa.*"

"Certainly," said I, "there were Dragons, and men have killed them; and because they have killed them all, we go so proud and say they never were. This is a veritable thing, and will explain much."

"Signore," he said, "you believe it! But you cannot be of the English nation to believe such a thing! Signore, you are a Christian!!"

"In England," said I, "it is as certain there were once Dragons as that there were once Saints. But now neither Saints nor Dragons



Della Robbia

S. Trinità, near S. Fiora

THE HOLY TRINITY, IN THE CONVENT IN THE WOOD

(*Alinari*)

bother us any more, we have equally killed them both; believe me in this, I was there no longer ago than last year."

"And I was here on the mountains. . . ."

It was already evening when I left him at the gate on the verge of the woods, looking towards Santa Fiora. He gave me wine and food in the garden, he told me wonderful things of the Mountain, he gave me a relic, too, to go with me always, infallible and holy, and I loved him. All the way home, under the stars on that dark and dangerous way, I asked myself why I loved him, but it was hidden from me. Even now I cannot tell. Was it because he believed in impossible things, even as I do?—only for him the tyranny we call reality had never existed, his home, as he had told me, was in the silence "on the mountains," and mine—ah! why?—in the mean noise of London.

When I came to the gate it was fast shut, and I had to knock for admittance.

XII

ARCIDOSO

THE road to Arcidosso takes one quite on to the western side of the Mountain, through the woods of Bagnora, heavy with sulphur, till suddenly, at a turning of the way at the top of a steep hill, Arcidosso herself comes into sight, and beyond, Montilaterone piled up on her mountain, and the towers of Castel del Piano almost hidden by the trees. All the way from Santa Fiora, and indeed from that little fortress village itself, Monte Labbro towers over the valley with that strange bizarre ruin on its summit, like the ruined castle of some *Signorotto*. What is it? you find yourself asking perhaps of some peasant, busy among his scanty vines. And always you get the same answer. "That—over yonder?—Ah! that is David's Eternal City—all that is left of it—Behold it then! Eccololi!"

Then maybe, as you get nearer to Arcidosso,



LA MADONNA, ARCIDOSO

some passer-by seeing you gazing at that strange outline will tell you softly, looking round lest he should be overheard : " Signore, it is the Nova Sion of *il Santo*, whom the carabinieri shot." And if you explain you are a stranger, and demand of him what Saint this may be, he will answer you again, even a little suspiciously, " Il Santo, Signore, il Santo David of Arcidosso," and pass on, leaving you puzzled.

It was a little child who explained to me the mystery, as I stood weary at midday on the verge of the woods, half-way on my road from Santa Fiora to Arcidosso. Half shyly she came towards me, and then as I offered her some of my lunch she ran up and took my hand confidently, and later, looking towards the Mountain, she said suddenly, " It is the new-broken tomb of our Gesù Cristo whom they killed again." And speaking of this, hand in hand, we came into Arcidosso.

Yes, for this cause the history of the place wearied me, I was thinking of David Lazzaretti, called Il Santo, whom some indeed believed to be "our Gesù Cristo." Repetti spoke of Arcidosso as a feud of the Aldobrandeschi, traced its story till it fell, in 1331, under the

dominion of Siena, declared that the monks of Abbadia S. Salvatore had the spiritual direction of the place, and cited an instance in 1249 when the Chancellor of the *Comunità* appeared before the Imperial Vicar to answer a suit of the Monastery of S. Salvatore for that Arcidosso had established a market to the prejudice of the Abbey. What was all that to me! Here in Arcidosso was a child who had seen the "new-broken tomb of our Gesù Cristo"; what was all the history in the world beside that?

Not without impatience I visited the churches of the place, S. Niccolò, S. Leonardo, S. Andrea. I traced the *terzieri* of the village; I found out the Castello, the Borgo Talassese, the Codaccio or Borgo Pianese; I climbed up to the ruined Rocca, now a prison; I wandered out to the shrine of Madonna delle Grazie, with its miracle pictures and banners, where the two confraternities of S. Rocco and SS. Rosario meet, and where the great fountain, known of old, sings all through the summer days. The church, they told me, was built after the great pestilence of 1348, when suddenly a little child led the people to the place, then in the midst of a wood, and there they built a temple to the



THE FALLS, ARCIDOSO

Beata Vergine,—but indeed I scarcely heeded what they said, for my heart was set on the strange mountain.

It was dawn when I set out, quite alone, even asking my way to leave the village. Down these winding, narrow, dirty streets I went into the grand and solemn country, till where the road ceased I found myself on the tawny, arid flank of Monte Labbro, alone with the sun.

XIII

THE NEW MESSIAH

TO regard men, their dreams and actions also, as formed and created by the great impersonal life and beauty which surround them, helps us after all but little to explain the force, evil or lovely, to which it is said they were thus subject, and which in them seems to find its most precise expression. If indeed we are but the voices of the hills, the plains, the streams, the forests, and the sea, we remain for ever as great a mystery as they. We cannot understand their language, nor in any way speak with them; only in us sometimes they seem to be articulate, or on some fortunate day as we look on them, always in an unexpected hour, there will rise in our hearts a peculiar joy, and for a moment every gesture of the hills seems to communicate to us some passionate and moving impulse, gone while we try to apprehend it, whose



DAVID LAZZARETTI
THE MESSIAH OF MONT' AMIATA

ghost, as it were, lingers in our hearts for days, whispering to us ever more faintly something we shall never overhear, that we shall never remember or understand.

It was the sun that began S. Francis's song, that dazzles us with light; it is of the valleys and the mountains that Jacopone sings; while, looking on the autumn fields, Alberti says he wept, he knew not why. In England perhaps it is the grave, persistent voice of the sea that speaks in our hearts most often; but in Italy it is eternally the dim, sweet valleys, the passionate hills that seem to speak to us continually of eager and simple things, those things which have created Europe, and forged out of the dream of a poet the religion of the modern world. And if Italy could of old cast her spell upon barbarian emperors, and with her mystery and beauty draw all men to her, here in Mont' Amiata, looking across the Patrimony and over Maremma to the sea, men have never been altogether deaf to the voices of a country which, beyond any other part of Tuscany, is full of strangeness, beauty, and silence, the gesture of the mountains so passionate and full of meaning, the plain so infinite and solitary. And then, not far away, is Latium.

It was here in this grave and solemn country, where the purple shadow of Maremma lies between the mountains and the sea, where the hills themselves are broken into fantastic shapes by the primeval forces of the earth, where forever the woods whisper enigmatically and sob and cry out, or are strangely silent all the winter long, that David Lazzaretti was born, in Arcidosso ; curiously enough—we may be sure it was not without its significance for him—on All Saints Day 1834. He came of very humble folk, people who were among that *basso popolo* which is nearest to the earth ; and his father, like his grandfather before him, followed the trade of a butcher. There in his father's house in the village of Arcidosso he learned to read and write, and while he was still very young he began to compose poetry, and in that simple place early became the admiration of his friends, who saw still in just that something wonderful and miraculous, and told him so. Is it just there his later dreams of apostleship, his claim to prophecy, at last his usurpation of the name of Jesus, lie hid ? Ah, who can tell ? He was the New Messiah ! But yesterday on the lips of a little child I heard his name : she called

him *Nostro Gesù*. Who may divide the false from the true? David Lazzaretti came among the peasants and did them good. He came to his own and they received him. He laid down his life for something. Was it only for David Lazzaretti? I'll not believe it. I have read his life as written by a hostile and scornful priest; I have read the scientific and obscure explanation of Signor Barzellotti, a native of Pian Castagnajo; and full of information as both these little books are, they seem to me to lack humanity: for the one is content to know that he was excommunicated as was Galileo, while the other finds a mere egoist ready not only to labour for the poor, but to die willingly at the hands of ignorant men and of fools. No; as it seems to me, whether David seems to us inspired or no, absurd or no, this at least we have no right to take from him, the honour of his sincerity. He died for the abused poor, those *contadini* who even to-day are too often the mere slaves of the Padrone, and who in Tuscany, at any rate, are the salt of the earth, in whom one day we shall find the salvation of Italy.

David has had many predecessors. Without returning so far through the centuries as to

come upon the Saint of Assisi and his followers, or even to Bartolommeo Carosi, called Brandano the inspired Sienese, who is now but a name in the language, as is said to-day in Tuscany of those who prophesy evils *sono le profizie di Brandano*, there was in our own days, too, Simplicio of Sulmona, there was Oreste di Cappelle, who read the future from the face of the rising sun, who wandered through the world, and, returning, passed seven years in the cemetery of his native village in the company of skeletons, wearing a hair-shirt and scourging himself night and day. He too drew tears and groans from all who heard him, and at last, going on pilgrimage, visited all the shrines in Italy, remaining for thirty days on Monte di Ancona, for twelve days on Monte di S. Bernardo, and climbed the highest summits, bareheaded, in the snow. He too fled away, going to Corsica, and there God revealed to him his Apostolate, so that on returning he went again through all Italy, and wrote with his blood the name of the Virgin on the gates of every city. And at last by the inspiration of the Eternal Father he assumed the name of the New Messiah. So he went through the fields in a blue robe, bareheaded in the

sun, and in his hand he bore a great staff of chestnut wood, and there followed after him Pantaleone Donaddio who was S. Matthew, Antonio Secamiglio who was S. Peter, while in Maria Clara was revived the spirit of S. Elizabeth, in Vincenzo di Giambattista was found S. Michael the Archangel. Thus he went over the hills, followed by the apostles and the three Maries. And it seems to me David Lazzaretti was his brother; only while Oreste was an Abbruzzese David was a Tuscan—a Tuscan from the province of Grosseto, on the verge of Maremma, on the confines of Umbria and the Patrimony. And even as Oreste had heard a voice and seen a vision at a turning of the way amid the shining flax, so David in the woods or in the byways of the mountains was transfigured, invested with a new and pure spirit, so that his friends (who believed in him), his family (who followed him), found in him another that they knew not, and ever after remained among his most devoted disciples.

For it was not always so. When David Lazzaretti came to manhood he followed the trade of a *barrocciaio*, well known through all the Mountain for his physical strength and his

blasphemy. He himself speaks of his evil life, not, I think, with regret, but as some strangeness, some disease that had passed from him. He was a poet ; from day to day he dreamed dreams, he came under the influence even in that far place of the political dreams of Young Italy. He fell in love ; at twenty years of age he married Carolina Minuccia of Arcidosso, by whom he had a son and a daughter, witnesses of his pitiful end.

He was thirteen when he first heard those voices which later became so insistent ; but then he did not heed them. The continual need to work, the physical toil imposed on him by his trade, the journeys he made round about the Mountain, for long saved him from a tendency to mystic raptures that he seems to have been born with, that was certainly in his family ; for though his biographers speak little of his mother, I have seen her and spoken with her, and she too, it seemed to me, might well have been aware if she would of the voices of Earth. However that may be, David exercised his trade till he was thirty-five years old, and then suddenly in 1869 his voices, insistent for once, bade him go to Rome, which he did, taking with him the *terra gialla* of the

Mountain, from a trade in which so many of the inhabitants get their living.

He had always been eager to talk of his "vocation," and in the account which he published concerning it he speaks very definitely of "an unknown and mysterious person" who it seems had appeared to him as early as 1848, telling, as he says, what later came to pass, but enjoining him not to speak of it at all. It was the same "mysterious person," appearing to him in a vision, that in 1869 bade him go to Rome and tell to the Pope only what had been revealed to him. "Awaking," he says, "I was a new man. A mysterious power had taken hold of all my senses and intellect, and yet my will and reason were free and had all their normal power."

In Rome he seems to have obtained a brief interview with Pius IX., sending him, through Cardinal Panebianco, a "Memoir" of all that had befallen him. But almost in the same night a new vision came to him, in obedience to which, instead of returning home, he retired to the Sabine mountains, to "a barren, dry, obscure place under a lofty rock, where was hidden the cave of Beato Amadeo." Here he lived for a long time with a certain Ignazio

Micus, a Prussian, who had dwelt for fifteen years in the Hermitage of Santa Barbara hard by. It was with this hermit he returned to Arcidosso. For so "extraordinary" were the things which befell him in that lonely place, that he could no longer delay the beginning of his "mission." What these "extraordinary" things were we know from his followers, who have left more than one written account of what he told them, "full," as Signor Barzellotti says, "of the ingenuous spirit of the fourteenth century." It seems that after he had been for some days doing penance in the cave of Beato Amadeo, there appeared to him in a vision a warrior fully armed, who begged of him, *per amor di Dio*, to dig in that place where he knelt, for there, the Shade told him, he would find his bones, which he implored him to bury in holy ground. That David said he did. A report of this affair seems to have got abroad, for the Arciprete of Montorio Romano—a peasant too, one may suppose—said he helped him, so that people soon began to hasten to see the "Man of God."

Then another vision came to David, in which he saw and spoke not only with the Warrior, but with Madonna Herself, S. Peter

too, and S. Michael Archangel, and the Friar, that "mysterious person" who had already appeared to him more than once, and whom one may suspect to have been S. Francis, since later David expressed so great a love for the Poverello of Assisi. In the "*conferenza*," as he himself calls it, which followed, the Warrior confessed that he was an ancestor of his, a certain Lazzaro Pallavisimo, a Milanese who had been a penitent for forty-five years in that place, where at last he had been buried. At Rome, he said, at the Court of Leo x., he had fallen in love with the daughter of the Count of Pitigliano, had, by her suggestion, killed her father, and had had by her a son. Then while fighting for the Church against a king of France, having been taken prisoner, the king himself had granted him his life on finding in him his own illegitimate son. This strange story came to an end with "prophecies," and "strange revelations," and the "miraculous mission" of David had been sealed by S. Peter himself with the sign $\bigcirc + C$, which from that time remained ever in his forehead.

Whatever we may make of such a tale as that, David himself was found stretched on the earth, suffering from a kind of fit and, as it

seemed, at the point of death. He recovered, however, and returned with Ignazio into Tuscany. At Passo Corese, a lonely place enough, the "Friar" appeared to him, bidding him return to the cave in the Monte Sabina. More swiftly than any thought he found himself there in the very cave which he had walled up before departing, and indeed he knew not how he came there. Next day Ignazio came to the place and called David many times by name; and at last he was able to answer from within where he lay, and tell him as well as he could what had befallen. Then Ignazio made a small opening in the wall to let a little light into the cavern, but David, according to one of his followers, quoted by Signor Barzellotti, "remained for forty-seven days in that cavern to fulfil the will of God." One night a great storm rose, and seven times the thunder rolled among the hills, the lightning illuminating the whole place. At the seventh thunder-clap David saw near to him a great furnace suddenly ablaze, and a voice thrice bade him cast himself into the midst of it. For a time he hesitated, but at last, plucking up heart, he flung himself into the flames, which wrapped him round, and in a



ON MONTE LABERO

flash of light he saw "everything in God." From that time David had the gift of prophecy.

When he returned with Ignazio to Mont' Amiata the fame of these visions had already gone before him. He returned home a changed man; his very countenance seems to have gathered and retained a certain light from those flames into which he had plunged, and he astonished all who came to him with the story of his visions. And it is said that many left him at last, their hearts changed by the Spirit of God which shone in him. He read their hearts, and before they opened their lips told them what they would say. And they called him the Man of Mystery. It was, however, the marks set in his forehead that astonished the people most. Signor Barzellotti, a native of the Mountain, alludes to the report that David was born with two tongues, and tells us that Dr. Terni of Santa Fiora examined his body after death, and found in many places circles and signs burnt in with an iron, while the sign $\bigcirc + C$ on the forehead was, he assures us, "evidently tattooed." However that may be, it was this mark which most profoundly influenced those who became his first followers, a great number of whom

followed him to the lonely, bare height of Monte Labbro, which rises some five miles to the south-east of Arcidosso ; and there, under his direction, they began to build a tower on the summit of the Mountain.

It was in making the foundations for that stronghold, it seems, that David found the Grotto which to-day opens out of it under the ruins. Did he know of that secret cave already, or was it just a fortunate circumstance such as often befalls such men as David? Certainly he put that strange and almost terrible place, the work of prehistoric man, to good use. For it was there he gathered the peasants together to pray day and night. And it was over this cave, where of old man, just roused from the brute, hid himself to worship God, that David built his Tower, of great stones without mortar or cement. All, without distinction of age or sex, helped him ; men and women, boys and girls, abandoning their labour, went to build this Tower, which, rude as it was and exposed to the winds, soon in part fell down. But far from losing courage, his ideas grew within him, till one day he determined to build near the Tower a convent and a church, which together he thought would cost some forty thousand lire.

How he got together such a sum remains a mystery. Perhaps some rich man helped him, for David ever seems to have had in the background friends both powerful and wealthy, ready to assist him as far as they might. Those were the days of the great political movement which brought United Italy into being, and on both sides in that struggle there were those who disdained no means of influencing the minds of men on behalf of the cause they had at heart. Yet it might seem that it was rather those peasants who had believed in him and had followed him to Monte Labbro who helped him most. For at this time he founded the *Santa Lega* or *Fratellanza Cristiana*, and, more important still, the *Società delle Famiglie Cristiane*. The latter was a lay community which possessed everything in common, the products of the common work, the means of life and livelihood. They began by putting together their fields, their oxen and their crops, for a great number of them were small *contadini possidenti*, and like all their class, the most conservative force in Italy, profoundly hostile to any novelty, social or political. But David had come at a time when the ground was ready for him. He was not without a sort of culture,

and he knew how to treat the people simply ; his great strength lay, perhaps, in the fact that his culture, such as it was, was not beyond, was not out of touch with, the minds of the peasants round him. He was able to understand and to enter into their thoughts and desires, and by his genius to give them life and reality. Certainly his visions and raptures, the voices he heard, the gift of prophecy, were no new things. The Maremmese knew them well, for they are still, even to-day, full of occult notions, ideas tinged with the far-away, dim thoughts of the Etruscans ; they can receive and appreciate hints, as it were, from Nature, of the past, of the future, and find in their dim communings, in the shapes of rocks or of trees, in the flight of a bird, the aspect of the sky, marvellous revelations through which they often touch reality, finding perhaps in an appearance the image of that other which we have chosen, how arbitrarily, to regard as the only matter of fact. Even the clericals helped and liked him ; some strange, profound charm lay in the awakened soul of the sometime *barrocciaio*, who had, as it were, by means of the poetry of his nature, found salvation.

And since his great strength seems thus to

have lain in his temperament and in the limitations of his intelligence, it does not surprise us to find that that Society of Christian families which had built the convent and church was a failure, that before long it was grievously in debt, and that many were angered and disgusted. David's love knew not reason. He received every one into that fold, and left the practical management of affairs in the hands of others less honest, it may be, than himself; he was absorbed in his thoughts about God. At a certain hour in the evening, Barzellotti tells us, after the Rosary had been said, the women, of whom there were many at the Tower, went to bed, the men, however, remained with David, who either read or spoke to them. At midnight they went into the church or into the cave under the Tower, and said Matins and other prayers, then followed a reading and a meditation, till five o'clock, when, having heard Mass, they went to work. "Often," says one who was present,—“often the day broke and it seemed as though not an hour had passed, though we had stood all night to hear him, hardly breathing; and in the morning we went down the hillside by different ways to work again,

as fresh as though we had slept all night long."

David himself seems to have worked with his people till they protested, and his friends begged that they might do his share of the field work. He consented at last, but for one day's work only, and one hundred and eighty men and women crowded to help him. And on that occasion, it was the 12th April 1869, David made one of his best published speeches. He called himself a "mysterious being," and said that one day the mystery that was in him, and also in themselves, would be revealed clearly to all, but that meanwhile it was necessary that each should feel in the depths of his own heart a new birth, a "mysterious renewing." "With all my heart," he continued, "I long to hear every Italian tongue cry, *Evviva Iddio, Evviva Cristo, Evviva Maria, Evviva la Chiesa Romana*. There are those who hear me and will take me for a partisan of the priests. Ah, it is not so. If you should think so, you are mistaken. In truth I am a partisan of none, but of God only. I speak only what He whispers, I am the mouthpiece of God." He goes on to tell of his submission to God's Will, of his love for Mont' Amiata and for his friends.

Later he breaks out suddenly with fierce invectives against the Protestants, and enters into theological subtleties in which he loses himself. And for this Barzellotti thinks him the mouth-piece of some over-zealous priest.

Yet while the Society lasted it was not without a certain usefulness. Its high aspirations were not altogether wasted. It aimed not only at the improvement of agriculture, but at the instruction of the members and their children; it maintained a schoolmaster and a schoolmistress on Monte Labbro for several years, and, indeed, as Signor Barzellotti tells us, both were in the procession on the day of David's death. It failed, and an action at law followed. David was sentenced to two years imprisonment, being accused, and convicted, of dishonesty; and though he appealed to the Court of Perugia and was acquitted, he seems to have thought it better to leave the Mountain for a time.

From 1869 to 1873 David had remained, save for a few days' absence, in the Hermitage of Monte Labbro. He had long declared to his disciples that he would be called by God to go to distant lands, for there, said he, the accomplishment of his "mission" would be

prepared. Indeed the constant expectation of his departure strengthened his authority. A short absence in 1870, which he spent in the island of Monte Cristo, where again he suffered many visions, had certainly encouraged him in the belief that an occasional absence was not unfriendly to his power. On the night of January 5, 1870, he had gathered his most trusted followers together in the Hermitage on Monte Labbro and had there eaten with them. He sat in their midst, clad in a purple robe, and to each he gave a portion of bread, of a lamb, of wine. It was a strange supper ; even the prophecy touching the treachery of some of his disciples was not wanting, and he told of the great things that would befall in Arcidosso. "Return to the bosom of your families bearing with you peace and salvation ; set example of virtue not only to those of your own home, but to all who seek you in order to hear of me. Consider yourselves fortunate and happy if you are despised by those who do not love virtue. Be content and tranquil if you are in trouble or in poverty. Think not of the world, but of the purity of the soul. Prize suffering ; keep aloof from idleness ; at the day's end offer up your labour to God, and

He in Heaven will bless you." His absence was short. At the news of his return thousands hastened to await him from all parts of the Mountain. Anxious crowds thronged the bare sides of Monte Labbro. And as he was seen at last on horseback climbing through the low scrub of the forest, a great murmur of joy, that at last became a cry, rose from the people. And he came into their midst, greeting them all by name, and was lifted from his horse by a hundred arms gently on to the ground. He knelt down and gave thanks to God. Then turning to the people he began to speak. "God sees us, God judges us, God condemns us," he announced. He spoke slowly, syllable by syllable, almost chanting his words. He breaks almost into song—

*"Chi son i Re del Mondo? Non son caduca
polvere? O regi inorridite, presta è la man che
fulmina a subissare al suol le vostre inique cattedre
di falsi adulator . . . un sol sarà il Re."*¹

That was the year of the taking of Rome. Who knows what echoes of tremendous events about to befall Europe from the cunning power

¹ "Who are the kings of the world? Are they not falling to dust? O horror-stricken kings, swift is the hand that descends as the lightning to smite to the earth your iniquitous seats of false flatterers. . . . There shall be one only king."

of Bismarck may be found in David's speeches. His love for France was not less than his love for Italy. But it was of the latter he was thinking when he prophesied that the future liberator of the world would be an Italian who would unite himself to the Church, yielding kingly authority and dignity to the Pope and governing with him. Just there we seem to have the dream of a Catholic and a patriot, his vision, alas! so unreal, of Victor Emmanuel the Switzer king. But it is a greater and more splendid thing he sees when he tells us of the future unity of all the Latin peoples with Greece. And may there not have been some profound Latin instinct expressed in the vision in which the "Friar" says to him: "Let us go to Latium, the land of the great men"? Ah, even the peasants in this soil cannot forget the greatness of Rome.

But it was in 1873, after the close of the Prussian War, after the grotesque taking of Rome amid the howling of the populace, the greed and destruction of the barbarians of Cis-Alpine Gaul that David set out for France. Not for long, for in a few months he was back again; only to return again in 1875 to Lyons, where he seems to have remained with his

family till 1876. What caused him to leave Italy so often? Was he truly called of God, as he said; or were those accusations brought against him by those who thought him personally responsible for their losses, in the failure of the Società, the real cause of his continued journeying to and fro? In France, it is true, he found friends and benefactors both among the clergy and the laity who encouraged him in his "Apostolato," among others a certain Leon du Vachat, who is said by Barzellotti to have lent him eight thousand francs, and kept both him and his family in his house, paying their expenses at Lyons and elsewhere. And it is to him we owe, perhaps, the publication of David's writings.

At the end of 1876, when he returned to Monte Labbro, which from this time he called Monte Labaro, the Holy Ensign, where was to be built that new Sion which would be one of the Seven Eternal Cities to rise in Mont' Amiata, a certain change may be discerned in his doctrine. At first some of the clergy of Arcidosso, as I have said, supported him, partly perhaps on account of his miraculous conversion, which, as they thought, was bound to edify true believers. It was the Bishop of Montalcino

who had consecrated the church in Monte Labbro, served by two ex-frati of the Order of S. Philip Neri, who had become his disciples. It was the publication of his book *My Striving with God*, "*La Mia Lotta con Dio*," that first seems to have roused ecclesiastical suspicion against him. Perceiving this, and altogether distressed by it, in November 1877 he went to Rome and, as many have done before and since, got no hearing. Indeed, the one thing that really seems to frighten and paralyse the government of the Church is a book. It was the same in the sixteenth century as to-day; the invention of printing is the one real blow the world has been able to deal at Catholicism.

While David was in Rome, the Bishops of Montalcino and Montefiascone suspended the two ex-frati, Padre Polverini and Padre Imperuzzi, *a divinis*, and the chapel of Monte Labbro was laid under an interdict. It was the eve of the death of Pius IX. and of Victor Emmanuel, and with these events, apparently of so much importance for Italy, David announced the Era of the Law of Right, the Reign of the Holy Spirit. He made submission to Leo XIII., and persuaded Padre Imperuzzi to do the same; Padre Polverini, however, refused to give in.

Again he went to France, and even to London, and on his return we may again perceive an advance in his teaching. It is no longer *Evviva la Chiesa Romana* he cries, but *Viva la Repubblica, ch'è il regno di Dio*; writing indeed those hymns for that state established certainly in his heart, in all noble hearts perhaps, to which he had won so hardly. Was there something not quite sane in his dreams? It is difficult to say. Yet in his last work, the *Simbolo della Nuova Riforma dello Spirito Santo in 24 Articoli*, something exaggerated, something like a cry of despair, as though he already saw himself forced to give in or to fulfil the dreams of the peasantry, is heard; and the last article declares: "We conclude firmly that our Master, David Lazzaretti, the anointed of the Lord, judged and condemned by the Roman Curia, is actually Christ, the Leader and Judge, in the true and lively figure of the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ into the world. . . ." Thus began, as he himself said, the fifth Act of his Tragedy.

David returned to Italy for the last time in June 1878. On August 14, the Vigil of the Assumption—Our Lady of the Harvest—an enormous crowd of his followers gathered on

Monte Labbro to descend with him, as he had promised them, on the next day to Arcidosso, into that new kingdom where, so he had seemed to say, they would have a larger share of their crops and harvests than their masters themselves. That night there were no bonfires on the Mountain or in Maremma; Madonna was forgotten, the Kingdom was at hand. The authorities, realising too late that there might well be danger in the excitement and greed of such a multitude, hastily sent for carabinieri, increasing the force in Arcidosso from the usual two or three to eight or nine. Yet it was chiefly the priests who were his enemies. The Prefect of Grosseto was his friend, forced at last to betray him.

On the night of the Vigil David watched alone on Monte Labbro, and coming at length to the crowd, so great that all the side of the Mountain seemed to be alive with men, women, and children, he bade them to say the Rosary with him. Then he invited them into the church. There, in a profound silence, every eye fixed upon him, he spoke at last of his descent of the Mountain. Then he told them to return to their homes, and going himself into the Hermitage, followed by his disciples, he made

them put on the symbolic dresses of his Company, which he had brought from Turin. Then he saw before him the mysterious people of his dreams, the personages of his visions, the Legions he had awaited in his heart. And with them he returned to the church.

It was again in procession, a few days later, in the dawn of August 18, after a night spent in prayer and fasting that he set out for Arcidosso. In that strange company were seven "legionary Princes," chosen to command the *Milizie crocifere dello Spirito Santo*. They were clothed like the "seven great personages" that David had seen in his vision in the Sabine hills. They wore over a fantastic, close-fitting dress of grey and red a blue mantle lined with scarlet. And David himself was dressed as they were, save that instead of a scarlet hat with hanging point and a yellow stripe he wore a blue head-dress with three tall, drooping feathers, one of green, one of yellow, one of blue, and before a silver dove with an olive branch in its beak. There followed the twelve Apostles and the Disciples, and the former wore blue mantles but the latter red. Then came the Hermit Priests, who represented a new religious Congregation; they too wore a blue

mantle, and carried in their hands a yellow crozier. The women were not less numerous, not less fantastically clothed. First came the Matrons and Sisters of Charity, the former in red mantles, the latter in blue; then followed the Maidens, and after them the Daughters of the Canticles, all robed in white with wreaths of roses on their heads, and among them was Bianchina, David's little daughter. High above the heads of this procession, which, after the band, was headed by the children, numerous flags were seen, the white and blue banners of Our Lady of Victory borne by the Maidens, the white banners of Christ, the yellow ensign of the Levites, the red of the Soldiers of the Holy Militia, the three flags of the Italian, French, and Spanish legions. Then they set out in the dawn singing David's hymns.

Thrice, Barzellotti tells us, they wound round the Mountain while the sun rose slowly over that strange, barren world, glistening on the shouting waters of the little Fiora, shining at last on the far-away sea. Some doubtless on the way turned over and over in their minds those words in the Book of the Heavenly Flowers where the Prophet describes the descent of the New Moses from the Mountain.

"This," he had said, pointing to his red mantle,—"this is a token of blood, the blood of the new Abel, which before long will be shed and mingled with That Which is in the Chalice."

The first part of the procession had already begun to move when a messenger came in, panting, from Arcidosso. It was David's brother Pasquale, he bade him "for Heaven's sake not to come down, for in the village were those who were waiting to shoot him and his flock." Was it too late to return? Did he even wish to return? Who knows? At least he answered in a clear and ringing voice, so that all might hear, that he wished harm to no one, that he feared nothing. Then in God's name he bade them follow him, doubting nothing, for not a hair of their heads would be touched. "The victim," said he "will be myself alone." And he went on his way.

The day was calm, and full of the still heat of summer. David moved hither and thither, giving his orders with vigorous gestures as he was used to do. Twice when others joined the procession on the way he addressed them, asking them if they desired the Republic, and when from thousands of throats came the eager and passionate "Sì," he continued:

"The Republic begins to-day in the world. It will not be the Republic of 1848; it will be the Kingdom of God, the Law of Right which has succeeded to the Law of Favour, *La legge del Diritto succeduta a quella di Grazia.*"

Then the women and the maidens began to sing one of David's hymns. Barzellotti has given us some of the lines—

*"E quando arrivato
Sarò all' agonia,
Ti prego, O Maria,
Soccorrimi Tu.
Raccogli quest' alma
Nel santo tuo velo,
Scortandola in cielo
Unita con Te."*

It was half-past nine when they approached Arcidosso. There a great crowd awaited them; but the murmur of the voices died away as they approached. Out of the crowd, which indeed blocked the road, the *Delegato di Pubblica Sicurezza*, De Luca, and the Syndic, followed by nine or ten carabinieri, advanced a little on the road to meet them. David left his place in the procession, passed the children who headed it, and went alone to meet the *Delegato*, who had stopped in the middle of the road and had begun to read the

three intimations ordered by the law, calling on David to return. When he had done there was a great silence, then David was heard to reply, "I go forward in the name of the Law of Right and of Christ the Judge." And he pointed to an image of Christ Crucified on a banner floating above his head. The *Delegato* answered nothing. Presently David spoke again. "If it is Peace that you desire, I bring it you; if Pity, here it is; if Blood, lo! I am here," and he opened his arms and waited in silence.

A thrill of excitement, expectation, and desire ran through the multitude. The *Delegato*, it is said, would have spoken with him, and indeed did so; David replied with a wave of his arm, as was his way. De Luca brandished his gun: they stood alone in the midst of the way between the two crowds, who looked on in silence. Suddenly David was seen to turn and eagerly wave to his followers, uttering a few words drowned in the enormous cry that rose on all sides: "*Viva, Evviva la Repubblica!*" Already stones began to fall on the *Delegato* and the carabinieri. Then a man's voice rose suddenly above the shouting. "Fire!" he cried, and in a moment the rifles answered,

not once nor twice, but many times, and David and the *Delegato* and the carabinieri were lost in the clouds of smoke.

As the smoke drifted away in the hot air David was seen to be lying in the road motionless, one or two of his disciples bending over him. The multitude apparently watched what had happened without much disquietude. Had not the Prophet himself said that no shot could kill him? But when his wife and children had come up weeping, to find him wounded and bleeding, he was carried away on a ladder along the road leading to Santa Fiora, the procession following in order, singing his hymns. They had no thought of revenge; their faith in God and His Prophet was such that they thought all had befallen to try their faith; and even at the worst if David were dead would he not rise again on the third day? The people of Arcidosso saw them depart with relief, they had feared an attack on their trumpery shops and wretched homes, which even to a beggar might seem indeed to offer but little as loot.

So the procession passed along the hot, white road toward Bagnore. One of the spiritual Princes, Barzellotti tells us, a tall, strong man,

with long white hair and beard, explained matters as they went. The Prophet had said, "I shall be the victim." What could that mean but that he would be wounded even to death, that he would rise again? So he comforted them. But David gave no sign of life, only now and then in his agony a groan escaped him.

It was past midday when they reached the village. The dying man was laid on a bed in a little house half-hidden in the chestnuts near the road. Around him knelt his disciples, waiting for him to revive; but he had only a few hours to live, for the three bullets that had struck him had entered the brain.

"I found him," said one of the witnesses at the trial, "lying on a bed, while near by knelt his young daughter and his son Turpino. The girl was still dressed in white, with a long veil and a chaplet of roses on her head. Turpino, too, was in the dress of the Lazzarettisti. They were weeping. Near the dying man was Dr. Terni of Santa Fiora, who told me that he had only a few minutes to live. On one side was David's wife, sobbing. I said something to her to try to comfort her, but she answered, weeping, 'He is dying for the Glory of God.'"

It was dawn when he breathed his last, surrounded by his followers, who did not believe that he was dead till they had seen him with their own eyes. Nor then were they overcome by grief. They waited, praying and singing hymns, thinking, indeed, of his resurrection, and no one would have touched his body but that an order came from the authorities that obliged them to bury him in the cemetery of Santa Fiora.

There he indeed awaits the resurrection; nor is there need of any stone or word to mark his grave, for each year at springtime flowers, red as blood newly shed, blossom in that place, springing, as they say, from the heart of the Prophet: there the Lazzarettisti, kneeling together and binding them in bunches, place them beside their beds under the blessed image of Madonna, as who would say—

“He saved others, himself he could not save.”

CONCLUSION

IT was one morning not long after that climb at dawn to David's ruined Tower, that I left Arcidosso for the railway on my way into the valleys, for indeed autumn was come, and the green of the forest was turned to gold, and all the fountains were filled with rain. Again in the dawn I set out, passing through Castel del Piano, that Castelletto of the Aldobrandeschi of Maremma which Guido Riccio, Podestà of Siena, took from Guido and Stefano of the Counts of Santa Fiora ; and which Pio II. praised so well for its beauty, calling it the first among the villages of the Mountain. And indeed to-day its walls are still washed by those streams that, as he found, come singing through the shadow under the trees about the Castello. Like the other strong places in the Mountain, Castel del Piano came to Cosimo de' Medici after the fall of Montalcino, when the Republic of Siena died in 1557.

There is but little to see there beyond the Madonna of the place, the Pretorio, the Loggia del Mercato, the Casa della Comunità, two fountains and several churches, one called S. Maria delle Grazie and another S. Maria dell' Opera or Madonna Nuova, and that is the biggest church in the Mountain; a building of the seventeenth century. While in the Spedale della Misericordia without the Castello, the Compagnia di S. Giovanni Decollato has for centuries been established, and there Francesco Vanni has painted the death of the Forerunner.

But the call of the road was in my heart. I stayed but a brief two hours before I set out for Seggiano, which I reached at midday. Divided very long ago into two parts, Seggiano Vecchio and Seggiano Nuovo, the place possesses to-day almost nothing of any interest. It is the last village on Mont' Amiata, and there indeed I seemed to leave the Mountain for the valley, since Seggiano may well be said to be in Val d'Orcia. So I went on my way by the long road to Mont' Amiata Station, which I reached at sunset.

And, strangely enough, eager as I had been at last to leave the Mountain, now that I was there in the valley waiting for the train, a



ON THE WAY TO THE VALLEYS—NOON ON THE ROAD

real sadness fell upon me, a sort of regret for all that simple and beautiful world I was leaving,—yes, I could not but admit it—certainly for the last time. There I had been happy, I had forgotten—ah! what had I not forgotten, in the silence of the woods, with the sun and the wind and the streams? And for what was I forsaking that quiet world which had been my friend?

Just then the whistle of the engine reached me as the train came round a bend of the line. It was too late to turn back now, the porter had already seized my bag and was standing waiting to send me on my way. No, there was no escape. Yet truly I would have given then all I possessed in the world to return by the road I had come, to look once more on those mountains towards Rome, to await one more sunset looking over the Patrimony. And I was going back to Umbria. . . .

Such, I thought, as the train lumbered up the valley, such is the original curse of all travellers, that even our pleasures and best adventures only bring us regret. It is a tragedy—*a spiritual farce*.

So I reasoned with myself all the way to Chiusi. There I stayed on my way. The

inn was good, the bed soft and clean, the sky a miracle of stars; moreover, the wind came from the mountains; yet sleep would not come into my heart, but stood and stared at me all night long with pitiless eyes of iron. So I rose up after midnight and went on my way. Truly for what had I forsaken the Mountain that had been my friend!

When the sun rose I found myself lying by the side of the most beautiful lake in Italy, on the verge of Umbria—Umbria, which I had not dared to approach since one day in the sunshine I seemed to hold in my very hands all that was worth having in the world,—that vanished at sunset. And so as the sun rose I sat by the side of Lago Trasimeno, considering in my heart of all those things which had befallen and of the silence between now and then. And suddenly as I frowned into the lake, where the rushes whispered together by Passignano, I looked up, and there, like some fragile and exquisite ghost, Mont' Amiata stood before me, her peak shaped like some marvellous horn, blue and silver in the delicate light.

And with this in my heart I set out on my way to Assisi.

NOTES

Page 4, line 17.—The Abbey of S. Antimo was, in the Middle Ages, one of the most conspicuous among the Benedictine monasteries of the Peninsula, and also, with the exception of the Badia S. Salvatore in M. Amiata and S. Galgano in the Val di Merse, the most powerful ecclesiastical feud in the Sienese State. For the modern reader, however, its greatest interest is probably to be found in the fact that it presents one of the most notable examples in Italy of that peculiar style of architecture which had its origin in the eleventh century, when, the fatal year 1000 having passed, that universal dread of the end of the World, which had so long paralysed the minds of men, began to fade away. The first three years of the century being over, the World awoke to new youth, and casting off its torpor of fear (as Rudolf the Bald, the chronicler of Cluny, tells us), “clothed itself on with a white garment of churches—*passim candidam ecclesiarum vestem indueret.*” Nowhere was the activity greater or more febrile than in France and Italy; and “it is precisely in these new ecclesiastical structures that we see the earliest examples of that transitional style of architecture which continued to develop itself throughout the eleventh, twelfth, and part of the thirteenth centuries, and to which the name of Romanesque was justly given, because, in the world of Art, its development was coeval and corresponded with that of the *Romance* tongues in the world of Literature.”

One of the most notable features of this new style was the substitution of vaulted stone roofs for the ancient wooden ones ; but, in its application, the architects of the period proceeded slowly and tentatively, commencing, in the early part of the eleventh century, by covering with cross-vaulting the lesser naves alone, the great central nave being still often roofed with beams. This mixed style was long preserved in Italy, and continued to be adopted as late as the twelfth century, to which period, judging from the above described method of roofing the naves, from some special ichnographic peculiarities and from its general architectural characteristics and ornaments, we may probably assign the erection of the Church of S. Antimo. Especially interesting is the construction of its apse, annular in form with radiating chapels, a method of building which, though common enough in France, is extremely rare in Italy, where, exclusive of S. Antimo, there are said to be only three other examples attributable to the Romanesque period. Of these the most ancient, which we may almost call embryonic, is to be found in the Church of S. Stefano in Verona, and dates from the tenth century ; while the other two exist in the Abazia della SS. Trinità in Venosa and in the Cathedral of Acerenza, both of them founded in the eleventh century, during the Norman domination.

Of the original Abbey, which was of much earlier date, the only remains are to be seen in the crypt below the present sacristy.

For full particulars, both architectural and historical, the reader should consult the learned monograph of CAV. ANTONIO CANESTRELLI, *Ricerche storiche ed artistiche intorno all' Abbazia di S. Antimo*, which appeared in the *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria*, vol. iv (1897) pp. 57-82.

Page 12, line 4.—According to the legend the six steps

which lead from the first cloister of the convent to the Church of S. Francesco mark the burial place of eighteen knights of the house of Tolomei, who were invited by the Salimbeni to a repast (*merenda*) at the village of Colle, outside the Porta Romana, some four miles from Siena, and there treacherously slain. Thenceforward the place where they were murdered was known as *Colle Malamerenda*. Probably, however, the story is nothing but a fable. See the article of E. GROTANELLI DE' SANTI, *La favolosa strage di Colle Malamerenda*, in the *Miscellanea storica Senese*, vol. i. (1893) pp. 209-215.

Page 12, line 7.—The reader who desires to illuminate the dull details of topography by the associations of the sites described may like to be reminded that the scene of one of BOCCACCIO'S *Novelle* is laid in Buonconvento. See *Il Decamerone*, ix. 4.

Page 15, line 3.—The Bagni di Vignone are well worthy to be visited, if only for their connection with St. Catherine of Siena. See E. G. GARDNER, *S. Catherine of Siena* (Dent, 1907), p. 13. The earliest record which we have of them is, probably, referable to the year 1170, when they were given in feud to Cardinal Unifredo by the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa; but there is reason to believe that they were not unknown to the Romans.—See REPETTI, *Dizionario geografico fisico storico della Toscana* (Firenze, 1833), vol. i. p. 232.

Page 16, line 27.—See G. RONDONI, *Sena Vetus o il Comune di Siena dalle origini alla Battaglia di Montaperti* (Torino, Fratelli Bocca, 1892), cap. vii.

Page 26, line 1.—In addition to the *Dizionario* of REPETTI, referred to in the text, the reader may consult RONDONI,

op. cit. pp. 34-37, and for the imperial diplomas, BÖHMER, *Acta Imperii Selecta*. Many imperial privileges and papal bulls are also to be found in the *Carte diplomatiche della Badia di S. Salvatore in Montamiata*, preserved among the Sienese archives, while the *instrumentarii* of the Commune, known as the *Caleffi*, lay before us all the policy of Siena with regard to the Abbey and the Castello. In consulting these the *Inventario generale del R. Archivio di Stato in Siena*, published by A. LISINI (Siena, Tip. Luzzi, 1899), will be found extremely useful. Another most important contribution to the literature of the subject is the article of L. ZDEKAUER, *Sugli Statuti del Monte Amiata*, in "Studii Giuridici dedicati e offerti a Francesco Schupfer nella ricorrenza del xxxv. anno del suo insegnamento" (Torino, Fratelli Bocca, 1898), pp. 239-253. This work contains a synopsis of over a hundred documents, for the most part still unpublished. In studying the relations of the monastery with Orvieto the *Codice Diplomatico della Città d'Orvieto*, by L. FUMI (Firenze, Vieusseux, 1884), will prove invaluable; while, for its relations with Viterbo, CALISSE, *Documenti del Monastero di S. Salvatore sul Monte Amiata, riguardanti il territorio romano (Secoli viii.-xii.)*, Estr. dall' Arch. della R. Società Romana di Storia Patria, vol. xvi.-xvii. should be consulted.

Pages 26-27.—For the legend of the foundation of the Abbey, see GIGLI, *Diario Sanese* (2a edizione), ii. 462-465, and RONDONI, *Tradizioni popolari e leggende di un Comune Medioevale e del suo contado* (Firenze, Ufficio della Rassegna Nazionale, 1886), pp. 105-106.

Pages 30-32.—See D. WINSPEARE, *Storia degli abusi feudali* (Napoli, Gabriele Regina, 1883), p. 319, nota 587; C. CANTÙ, *Storia degli Italiani* (Torino, 1854), cap. lxxv. n. 25; and, for the various feudal services owed

by the inhabitants of the Castello to the Abbey, L. FUMI, *op. cit.* p. 211.

Page 33, line 2.—The document referred to was published by L. ZDEKAUER, as an appendix to his *La "Carta Libertatis" e gli Statuti della Rocca di Tintinnano*, (1207-1297), in the *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria*, vol. iii. (1896) pp. 374-376.

Page 42, line 20.—The quotation is from the *Commentaries* of Pius II. The "Bishop and six Cardinals" formed part of the papal *entourage*. The Pope was lodged in the Abbey, while the Bishop and Cardinals found quarters in the *Castello*.

Page 45, line 7.—These inscriptions are as follows:—
(To the right)

AVD. CAVS. ORD. N. ABALI
S. IVRISD.

which may be interpreted *Audientia causarum Ordinis nostræ Abatialis iurisdictionis*.

(To the left)

AVDIENTIA CAVSARVM
VIDVARVM ET PVPILLORVM.

Above the former is a fresco entitled *Recta Iustitia*, representing the Archangel Michael with a balance; while above the latter is an Angel leading a child by the hand, with the legend *Pia Protectio*.

Page 45, line 10.—BIEL. COM. IN SIENA, *Cod. A. x. 74*. Only the first ten books of the *Historie* of GIUGURTA TOMMASI have been printed. His widow, Livia Cinuzzi, died in 1628, before she had completed the task of editing the later and more valuable portion of his voluminous work.

Page 48, line 2.—Besides the relics alluded to in the text, the Abbey possesses a curious memento of one of those strange mediæval spectacles so many of which have passed away during the memory of men yet living. For, just as Empoli celebrated her *Volo dell' asino*, so, until quite recently, did Abbadia continue to celebrate her *Volo della capra*; and the rope on which the unfortunate animal “flew” from the summit of the church-tower to the outer gate of the Abbey is still preserved in a cupboard of the sacristy. None of the Abbadinghi were able to give me any information concerning the origin and significance of the spectacle, though many of them remembered it well. Indeed, I believe that my first visit to Abbadia, some thirteen years ago, was made almost immediately after its abandonment. Equally without result were my inquiries touching the *Corso de' maccheroni* of S. Fiora, which takes place annually, in the month of August. It consists of a race along the piazza to where great bowls of macaroni stand a-row. Into these the competitors, whose hands are tied behind them, plunge their faces and eat like swine, he who first consumes his portion being acclaimed the winner.

Page 70, line 26.—In Monte Amiata, as elsewhere in Tuscany and Umbria, and, I believe, also in the March, bells are rung to avert lightnings, winds and hail, which are attributed by the peasantry to diabolic influences. For the *contadino* of to-day, as for his ancestors for immemorial ages, Satan is the “prince of the power of the air,” and it is believed that bells, and especially church bells, may prevail against him. Is it not written in the ancient *Hymn of the Bell*?—

“Laudo Deum verum
 Plebem voco
 Congrego clerum
 Defunctos ploro
 Pestem fugo
 Festa decoro

Funera plango
 Fulgura frango
 Sabbato pango
 Excito lentos
 Dissipo ventos
 Paco cruentos."

and, finally, the terrible verse :

"Est mea cunctorum terror vox dæmoniorum."

On this subject something has been written in HEYWOOD's *The "Ensamplers" of Fra Filippo* (Siena, Torrini, 1901), pages 290 *et seq.* ; while, in addition to the authorities there cited, the reader may consult G. BELLUCCI, *La grandine nell' Umbria* (Perugia, Unione Tip. Coop. Editrice, 1903), and the forthcoming volume *Il fulmine nelle tradizioni popolari antiche e moderne* by the same author.

Page 85, line 4.—For a full account of the Palio of Siena see W. HEYWOOD, *Palio and Ponte*, London, Methuen, 1904.

Page 95, line 14.—The Voyage of Italy, or A Compleat Journey through Italy. In Two Parts. With the *Characters* of the *People*, and the Description of the Chief *Towns, Churches, Monasteries, Tombs, Libraries, Pallaces, Villas, Gardens, Pictures, Statues* and *Antiquities*. As also of the *Interest, Government, Riches, Force, etc.*, of all the *Princes*. With Instructions concerning *Travel*. By *Richard Lassels*, Gent. who Travelled through *Italy* Five Times as Tutor to several of the *English* Nobility and Gentry. Never before Extant. Newly Printed at *Paris*, and are to be sold in *London*, by *John Starkey*, at the *Mitre* in *Fleet Street* near *Temple Barr*, 1670.

Such is the modest title of the work. The passage quoted in the text will be found on page 241 of the First Part.

Page 98, line 4.—The story “of the Judgment which befel a very great and cruel Usurer of the Town of Radicofani” may be read in the original in *Gli Assempri di Fra Filippo da Siena, Leggende del Secolo xiv.* Pubbl. per cura del D. C. F. CARPELLINI, Siena, Gatti, 1864. In his “*Ensamples*” of *Fra Filippo* (Siena, Torini, 1901) W. HEYWOOD has used this work as a basis for the discussion of the social conditions and beliefs of the Italians, and especially of the Sienese, during the later Middle Ages and early Renaissance. Several of the *Assempri* have been there translated in full.

Page 102, line 21.—The work here referred to is, of course, *Dante in Siena ovvero accenni nella Divina Commedia a cose Sanesi*, by BARTOLOMEO AQUARONE (Città di Castello, Lapi, 1889). The sixth chapter is devoted to Ghino di Tacco.

Page 102, line 24.—A notable example of a once proud Seignior reduced to absolute beggary by the new order of things is to be found in the case of Niccolò, Count of Tintinnano, who, in 1296 and again in 1298, was relieved by the Commune of Siena as a pauper.

R. ARCH. DI STATO IN SIENA. *Libri di Biccherna*, 1296, a c. 233 (usc.): *Item iij lib. in una tunicha, quam habuit NICHOLAUS, COMES DE ROCCHA AD TETENANUM, causa paupertatis; et est habita inde appodissa a dominis Novem.*

Ibid. 1298 a c. 202^t: *Item. iij. lib. xj. sol. vj. den. In quadam tunicha et in uno caputio et uno pario chaligarum datis pro amore Dei NICCHOLAIO DE TINTINNANO.*

Page 121, line 4. — Anno Domini, 1234. Postquam Pepus filius Tancredi Vicecomitis de Campilia, qui tum temporis arcem ipsam tenebat, juravit in manus D.

Transmundi Anibaldi Potestatis Senensis cum omnibus hominibus de Campilia facere pacem et guerram ad mandatum dictæ Potestatis et Comitatus Senensis et Comunitatis Senensis, dictus Pepus sprete religione iurandi cum illis de Castilione et cum Comitibus de Tintinano iuravit in manus Florentinorum et Urbevetanorum facere guerram Senensibus ad mandatum eorum, et juvare Montalcinenses tota virtute sua. Transmundus Potestas Senensis cum duabus partibus Civitatis ad Arcem ipsam accessit, et pars Burgi capta et combusta fuit, et sequenti die capta fuit reliqua pars Burgi cum sala et arce superiori—*Cronica Sanese in MURATORI, R. I. S. xv. 25, n. 16.* Compare also REPETTI, *Dizionario* cited, vol. i. pp. 424-425, and for a picturesque incident which followed the storming of the place see HEYWOOD, *Palio and Ponte*, p. 39.

It is, of course, equally possible that the Visconti of Campiglia may have been the viscounts of the Contea Aldobrandesca (compare BERLINGHIERI, *op. cit.* p. 24). The important point is that their name of Visconti was in its origin a title. Like all the rest of their class they were magnificent robbers, and, among the entries in the *Memoriale delle Offese*, it is recorded of one of these seigniors that he "abstulerat pecudes et oves Guidoni civi Senensi."—See L. BANCHI, *Il Memoriale delle Offese fatte al Comune ed ai Cittadini di Siena*, etc., in the *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, Serie iii. tom. xxii. pp. 197-234.

Page 122, line 6.—As to the war with the Salimbeni in 1374, see the *Cronica Sanese in MURATORI, Rer. Italic. Script.* xv. col. 242, 243. The Sieneſe were routed in the Piano di Boccheggiano, on the 23rd of October; and Benvoglienti states (col. 243, n. 70) that, in his opinion, it is to this reverse that the old translator of the *Fables of Æsop* (himself a Sieneſe) refers in his version of the Battle between the Beasts and the Birds, *Johanni Credi de'*

Visconti da Campiglia being there represented by the Bat. I quote the *favola* at length:—

“ *Della battaglia delle bestie cogli uccelli.* ”

“ Avendo mandato il liono la lepre per suo grande bisogno con lettere, trovossi col falcone, ed hagli tolto le lettere, e portolle dinanzi all’ aquila, e in queste lettere si conteneva cose di grande vergogna dell’ aquila ; civè ch’era trovata in avolterio col nibbio. E vedendo l’aquila che il liono cercava sua vergogna, mandò al liono imbasceria, dicendo che lo voleva per nemico, e che mai non porterebbe corona, se no ’l facesse conoscente di tanta follia. E udito il liono la sconvenevole imbasciata dell’ aquila, rispose gabbando : io ho intendimento di tenere consiglio e parlamento in questo mese, ea essembrare tutta la mia gente in maremma nel piano di Boccheggiano, e se ’l aquila ha intendimento di vendicare sua inguiria, ivi mi potrà trovare. Ed acciocchè a questo dia fede, voglio che gli portiate questa lancia e il guanto. Ora è stabilita la battaglia tra gli uccelli e le bestie ; ed ogni parte s’apparecchia e fornisce di tutti i fondamenti da battaglia ; e sono guinti in sul campo. E vedendo il pipistrello essere fatte le schiere ed essere più le bestie che gli uccelli, prese una lancia lunga, ed enne andato dalla parte delle bestie, ed accostossi colla masnada de’ topi. Ed allora l’aquila, siccome savia e provveduta ammaestra le schiere, e così fa il liono ; ed ordinato gli scorridori cominciassi la battaglia, e durò grande parte del dì ; nella quale battaglia gli uccelli hanno vinto e messe le bestie in isconfitta. E vedendo il pipistrello avere gli uccelli vittoria, tornassi fra gli uccelli, e stava quasi mezzo svergognato. Allora l’aquila lo fece pigliare ed impiccare per li piedi, e tutto quanto lo fece percussare. E quando fu spiccato, in presenza di tutti gli altri uccelli fecegli questo comandamento (e questo si è scritto per le mani del nibbio) : che mai di dī non si lasci trovare in luogo d’ onore ; e fu tormentato con grandissimi bastoni, e tutto fu fracassato.

(*Le Favole d'Esopo volgarizzate per uno da Siena* (Parma, P. Fiaccadori, 1860), Favola xlv. pp. 76-77.)

Page 131, line 6.—“Pietro, *pievano* of Proceno.” The word *pievano* is here left untranslated because we possess no English equivalent. In all the Italian-English dictionaries with which I am acquainted *Pievano* is said to mean “a parish priest” or “country parson,” and, even so excellent and well informed a writer as Professor W. F. BUTLER, in his *Lombard Communes*, p. 88, falls into the error of translating *Pieve* as “Parish.” A *Pieve* is, in fact, something more than a parish, being defined as *Chiesa parrocchiale, che ha sotto di sè priorie e rettorie e per lo più ville e castella* (MANUZZI, *Vocabolario* s.v.). In his *Cronica* (vii. 36) G. VILLANI classes *pievi* with “rich Abbeys.” A *Pievano* is, of course, the Rector of a *pieve*. The Italian for Parish Priest is *Parroco* or *Curato*. It would, on the face of it, be absurd to suppose that a mere parish priest would have been chosen to arbitrate between the Bishop of Sovana and the Abbot of S. Salvatore.

Pages 131-133.—For the facts here stated see an article in the *Miscellanea Storica Senese*, vol. ii. (1894) pp. 172-173.

Page 135, line 21.—For a picturesque description of the *Mugnello* see G. BARZELLOTTI, *David Lazzaretti di Arcidosso detto il Santo, i suoi Seguaci e la sua Leggenda* (Bologna, Zanichelli, 1885), pp. 78-86. “The great rough-hewn fountain,” mentioned in the text, is known among the common people as “*il piatto delle streghe*.”

Chapter X. — With regard to the Aldobrandeschi the reader should consult BERLINGHIERI, *Notizie degli Aldobrandeschi*, Siena, O. Porri, 1842; REPETTI, *Dizionario*,

cited, Appendice, cap. xii. pp. 55-63; AQUARONE, *Dante in Siena*, *op. cit.* vii. pp. 95 *et seq.*; RONDONI, *Sena Vetus*, viii. pp. 28 *et seq.*, and an article in the *Archivio Storico Italiano*, tom. xviii. (1886), "*Orvieto nel Medio Evo*," by the same author. See also L. FUMI, *Codice Dipl. di Orvieto*, *op. cit.* Doc. lxxvi., xc., xcvi., cv., cvi., cxx., cxxii., cxlix., clii., clxi., clxviii.

The origin of the Aldobrandeschi is a question which has been much debated. REPETTI (*ubi cit.*) and GIGLI (*Diario*, edition cited, ii. 733) assert that they were of Salic stock; and this view seems to be supported by the *Pergamene Bichi-Borghesi* (G. x.) in the R. ARCH. DI STATO IN SIENA (cited by RONDONI, *ubi cit.* p. 29, n. 1): "ex natione nostra lege vivere salica professi diximus." On the other hand, G. VILLANI (*Cronica*, ii. 21) and BERLINGHIERI (p. 16) maintain that they were of Longobard extraction. AQUARONE (p. 96) argues that this opinion is probably the correct one, because, among the Aldobrandeschi, the succession was not limited to the male members of the house, a thing altogether opposed to the well-known maxim of the Salic law that "*De Terra autem Salica nulla portio haereditatis mulieri veniat sed ad virilem sexum tota haereditas perveniat.*" This contention would, however, have more weight were it not for the well-known fact that, in course of time, women were admitted, generally, to succeed to all fiefs; and the Salic law lost all its force, except as to the succession to the crown. "Many instances are on record of women personally presiding over their own Courts, even over judicial combats; of their being summoned to and sitting in the Court of Peers, and, what is considered the highest of all honours, of their assisting at the consecration of the King" (*Co. Lit.* 325*b*. BUTLER'S note 280).

As to the Aldobrandeschi themselves we have no very definite information before the end of the eleventh century, though the genealogical tables, published by REPETTI and

BERLINGHIERI respectively, trace the family back to the eighth and ninth centuries. According to RONDONI (*ubi cit.*) the first record of their being invested with the dignity of Counts Palatine is to be found in a document of 1163. Originally, their jurisdiction would seem to have extended over the whole of the *Contado* of Roselle, in which case, both the Ardengheschi and the Pannochieschi must have been their vassals; while it is possible also that the seigniors of Campiglia d'Orcia may have gained their title of Visconti, as being the Viscounts (*vice-comites*) of the Contea Aldobrandesca (compare the note to chapter viii., p. 227 *supra*).

The statement that the Aldobrandeschi possessed more fortified places than there are days in the year is to be found in *Gli Assempri di Fra Filippo da Siena, op cit.* xxxiv. p. 116: "Si diceva che solevano avere più castella che non sono di nell' anno." There is a further reference to the Aldobrandeschi in *Assempro* xxxv.

Page 140, line 24.—"The Maremma is supposed to have been originally both fertile and healthy. It certainly formed part of that Etruria which was called from its harvests the *annonaria*. Old Roman cisterns may still be traced, and the ruins of Populonium are still visible in the worst part of this tract" (FORSYTH, *Italy*, p. 156). According to AQUARONE (p. 48) it only began to become insanitary in the tenth century when, after having devastated Genoa, the Saracens, as MALAVOLTI (i. 22¹) informs us, "presero e spogliarono similmente tutte le terre marittime con tanto rovina e tanta occisione, che quel paese non è mai più stato nè popoloso, nè domestico." Nevertheless, its deterioration was gradual. Even in the fourteenth century, FAZIO DEGLI UBERTI still speaks of the Maremma as

. tutta
Diletevole molto
(*Dittamondo*, iii. 9)

and, albeit he admits that it was *poca sana*, the greater part of it seems to have been still fairly habitable.

Pages 142-143.—For these conventions between Siena and Orvieto see FUMI, *Codice Dipl.*, *op. cit.* Doc. lxxiii., lxxiv.

As to the division of the Communal Army (*hostis*) into *milites* and *pedites*, see *Il costituito del Comune di Siena dell' anno 1262* (edition ZDEKAUER), p. xxxxiv. Compare also W. HEYWOOD, *Palio and Ponte*, p. 35 note.

Page 143, line 17 et seq.—Not only did the Aldobrandeschi themselves promise obedience to the Commune, but the inhabitants of the *Contea* also were sworn to observe the covenants and agreements already entered into by their seigniors; and it is worthy of note that, by the terms of the oath taken, the debt of reverence and honour due to the Communes of Pisa and Siena were expressly recognised—*Salvo honorem domini Imperatoris et reverentiam domini Pape et egregie Civitatis Pisane et Senensis in omnibus*. Two of the Sienese consuls were present at the ceremony—FUMI, *op. cit.* Doc. lxxvi.

Page 145, line 19.—The document which records the division of the *Contea Aldobrandesca* recites how, discord having arisen between the most noble and illustrious Counts Palatine, the Lord Aldobrandino, and his brethren, Bonifazio, Guglielmo and Aldobrandino, “et diabolico instinctu, minime non fraterno amore, set inimicabiliter hodiebles inimicitias pretractassent, multorum hominum corda bella et captivitates intervenissent, unde videbatur, honorabilis eorum domus et spetiosissimus Comitatus fore destructus, placuit ergo quinque nobilibus memoratis ad Urbemveterem, tamquam ad propriam matrem, reddere Civitatem” (FUMI, *op. cit.* Doc. cvii.).

Page 148, line 3.—It was further stipulated that the subjects of each of the contracting parties should be at liberty to enter and dwell freely in the territories of the other; and that neither should the Commune possess itself of any towns or villages in the dominions of the Counts, nor the Counts in those of the Commune without express permission first had and received. The *Castaldi*, consuls and governors of the towns and fortresses, as well as many of the common folk of the Contea Aldobrandesca swore to observe the terms of the treaty; and we note that for the ancient Sovana, where to-day are nought but ruins and a church “populated by great memories,” a consul and 120 men took the oath, a consul and 168 men for Pitigliano, about 500 for Grosseto, and the Chancellor of the Commune, and 250 for Belforte.—R. ARCH. DI STATO IN SIENA, *Caleffo Vecchio*, etc. 41-43; MALAVOLTI, i. 49; TOMMASI, i. 209; BERLINGHIERI, *op. cit.* p. 31; RONDONI, *Sena Vetus*, p. 30.

Page 148, lines 23-26.—The Count Guglielmo promised to take up his residence in Grosseto, *ipsum et turrim muniendo et ex inde preliando cum dictis Grossetanis, seu aliomodo taliter faciendo, quod redibunt et stabunt ad mandatum nostrum et Communis Senensis*.

With regard to the taking of Grosseto, see MALAVOLTI, *op. cit.* i. cte. 50-51; RONDONI, *Sena Vetus*, 30-31; L. BANCHI, *Il Memoriale delle Offese*, etc., in the *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, Serie iii. tom. xxii. (1875) pp. 226-228; TOMMASI, i. 213.

Page 149, line 25.—Among the other reasons which the Count Guglielmo had for hating the Sienese was the fact that (if we may believe the chronicles) he had been imprisoned by them for six months. “*In questo anno (1227) stette il Conte Guglielmo di Santa Fiore sei mesi in prigione in Siena* — MURATORI, *Rer. Ital. Script.*, xv. 23.

Page 152, line 9.—As to the events which led the Florentines to abandon their designs on Talamone see R. LANGTON DOUGLAS, *A History of Siena* (London, Murray, 1902), p. 71. The convention of the Counts with Florence will be found in the *Arch. Stor. Ital.*, Serie iii. tom. xxiii. p. 220. Compare FUMI, *Cod. Dipl.*, *op cit.* Doc. ccxcviii.

Page 153, lines 1-15.—The proceedings of the *Consiglio della Campana* with regard to the Seigniors of Torniella were published by Professor L. ZDEKAUER as an appendix to his *La Vita pubblica dei Senesi nel Dugento*, Siena, Lazzeri, 1897.

Pages 154-155.—As to the hostility of Count Umberto to the Sieneſe, and the events which led to his death, see BANDINI PICCOLOMINI, *Del Conte Umberto di Guglielmo Aldobrandeschi* in *Atte e memorie della R. Accademia de' Rozzi*, vol. iii. (1876-79), Adunanza del di 10 Agosto, 1878.

Page 157, lines 1-21.—The chronicle here quoted is that attributed to Niccolò di Giovanni di Francesco Ventura. It is published by G. PORRI, *Miscellanea Storica Senese* (Siena, 1844), p. 67. It gives a stirring account of the Battle of Monteaperto and should be read by every visitor to Siena. "As a battle-piece, painted in glorious words, it stands without a rival. There you may read of gallant deeds, of armed knights crashing together, of hard mail hewn, of shattered helms. There you shall find blood, blood in torrents, blood everywhere—the blood of 'those dogs of Florentines,' whom the valorous people of Siena, slew like swine in a slaughter-house. They seemed, cries the chronicler, *porci feriti*. And to all this you will pass from a scene of prayer and reconciliation in the Holy Sieneſe Church, where the Bishop and his clergy sing

‘the old Latin hymns of peace and love,’ and where the injured is seeking out the injurer to kiss him on the mouth and to pardon him ; while over all, battle-field and Cathedral alike, broods the sacred form of God’s most Holy Mother, Siena’s Protector and Advocate.”

Page 159, line 12.—Of the war with Ghinozzo da Sassoforte, the following details have been preserved for us. I translate from the *Cronica Sanese* in MURATORI, *Rer. Ital. Script.*, xv. 87 n.

“The Counts of S. Fiora made war on the Seigniors of Sassoforte of whom was the lord Ghinozzo. Wherefore the said Ghinozzo with his folk made an incursion into the lands of the Counts of S. Fiora and wasted them even unto the Patrimony ; for he was a man of puissance and bold ; and he had a horse of great worth and of marvellous courage. Nevertheless, on this raid, neither his horse nor his folk availed him aught, for he was taken by the Captain of the Patrimony and shut up in the fortress of . . .

“Now the Captain of the Patrimony would fain ride the horse of the said Ghinozzo and he knew not how to guide him, nor how to make him go. Ghinozzo, being shut up and guarded in the said fortress, spake unto him and said : ‘Wouldst thou that I should ride him and show thee the manner of his going?’ Said the Captain : ‘Take him and mount him.’ And Ghinozzo did so ; and he made him go along the ravelin of the fortress, first at a walk, then at a trot, and, at the last, at a gallop. Then did the said Ghinozzo bethink him to essay a great venture, and, as he rode the said horse, he cried, ‘Let him who wants me come to Sassoforte,’ and he leapt the said horse down from the ravelin of the fortress on to the barbacan thereof and thence to earth. And he struck spurs to his horse and got him away to Sassoforte. Wherefore the Captain and the others who saw that deed marvelled much, both at the

prowess of the horse and the courage of Ghinozzo, for the height of that leap was twenty cubits.

"Ghinozzo, lord of Sassoforte, being at war with the Counts of S. Fiora, raided the lands of the Counts even unto Magliano and Monteano; and he joined battle with the folk of the said Counts, and Ghinozzo and his folk were discomfited. Yet, through the excellence of his horse, he escaped, albeit his followers were taken. The Counts and their folk pursued hard after him; wherefore he fled into the territory of Siena and entered into Accesa, thinking to be safe therein. Now the fortress of Accesa belonged to the Bishop of Massa. Nevertheless, the Counts ceased not from pursuing him; and they laid siege to Accesa and guarded all the ways which led thereto; and divers days they abode there and besieged it. Therefore, Ghinozzo, when he perceived that he might not escape and that there was none to succour him, surrendered to the said Counts, and they led him away prisoner to S. Fiora. . . . Thereafter, Ghinozzo died in prison by reason of his little eating."

Page 159, line 13.—*Cronica Sanese* in MURATORI, *Rer. Ital. Script.*, xv. 114.—This was the same Count Jacomo, one of whose raids is thus described by an anonymous chronicler, in the year 1316: "Cavalchè el chonte Jachomo de' chonti da Sancta Fiore infino al bagnio a Maciareto e in Fileta infino a la Seghalaia, arsero e tenero grande danno e ucisero; ebero pregioni e grande di brede di bieste, e fuoro ciento cinquanta chavalieri"—*Frammento da una cronachetta Senese d'Anonimo del Secolo*, xiv. edito da MENGOSZI e LISINI, per le nozze Sarrocchi-Partini (Siena, Tip. Lazzeri, 1893), p. 21.

Page 164.—Those who desire to form some idea of the condition of the villagers in the Contea Aldobrandesca from the middle of the fourteenth century may profitably

study the recently published work of PAOLO PICCOLOMINI, *Lo Statuto del Castello della Triana* (Per le nozze Piccolomini della Triana-Menotti), Siena, Lazzeri, 1905. This Statute was enacted in 1351, "to the honour and reverence of Almighty God and of the glorious Virgin Mary, His Mother, and of Messer St. John and of Messer St. Anthony, the special Advocates of the Commune and of the men of the Castello della Triana and of all the Court of Heaven; and to the honour and exultation of the magnificent men and illustrious lords Andrea and Giovanni, Aldobrandino and Francesco, by the grace of God true and natural lords of the said Castello." It was compiled by three *massari* "at the commandment of the said Messer the Count Andrea," and, albeit the Aldobrandeschi sold this part of their domains to the Piccolomini in 1388, the *Statuto* continued to be observed as law up to the time of the Leopoldine reforms.

Yet interesting and instructive as is the Statute of the Castello della Triana, it is obvious that he who would attain to a proper understanding of the condition of the rural districts in the Middle Ages must extend his studies far beyond the walls of any single village, however typical. It is much to be desired that some German or Italian scholar—I fear none other would have the necessary patience—might undertake to elucidate the history of the Sienese *contado* as a whole. In this connection the following works, among others, might be consulted with profit: R. CAGGESE, *La Rep. di Siena e il suo contado nel secolo decimoterzo* in the *Bullettino Senese di Storia Patria*, vol. xiii. pp. 3-120; POLIDORI, *Statuto del Comune di Montagnuola dell' Ardinghesca 1280-1297*, in the *Statuti Senesi scritti in volgare ne' Secoli xiii. e xiv.* (Bologna, Romagnoli, 1863), vol. i. pp. 1 *et seq.*; BANCHI, *Statuto della Pieve a Molli de' Contado di Siena, volgarizzato circa l'anno 1338*, Siena, 1866, per nozze Ricci-Busatti; MIELI, *Statuto di Chiarenzana*, Firenze, 1892; ZDEKAUER, *Sugli Statuti della terra*

di Casole (1385-1561) in *Miscellanea Storica della Val d'Elsa*, vol. iv. pp. 120 *et seq.*; ZDEKAUER, *La "Carta Libertatis" e gli statuti della Rocca di Tintinnano* (1207-1297) in *Bullettino* cited, iii. pp. 327 *et seq.*; ZDEKAUER, *Sugli Statuti del Monte Amiata* (1212-1451) *con il testo delle franchigie di Montecello del 1311* in *Studii guiridici*, etc., *op. cit.*; ROSSI, *Documenti e Statuti del Castello di Montisi* (1197-1552) in *Bullettino* cited, vii. pp. 353 *et seq.*; FERRARI, *Monografia storica-statuarica del Castello di Farnetella in Valdichiana*, Rocca S. Casciano, 1901.

Page 176, line 4.—According to RONDONI (*Tradizioni popolari e Leggende*, *op. cit.* p. 106) there was formerly an ancient bas-relief above the outer gate of the monastery, representing a warrior fighting a dragon, with the inscription: "*Il Sig. Conte di S. Fiora a caccia per il bosco di questo convento, nel 1125 s' incontrò in un orrendo serpente, e, raccomandatosi alla SS. Trinità, l' uccise.*" For many years the skull of the monster was shown to the people on Trinity Sunday and devoutly kissed by them.

Chapter XII.—In addition to the *Dizionario* of REPETTI consult G. CONTRI, *Storia di Arcidosso*, Arcidosso, Tip. Gori, 1890.

Chapter XIII.—As to David Lazzaretti, the reader should consult G. BARZELLOTTI, *David Lazzaretti di Arcidosso detto il Santo, i suoi Seguaci e la sua Leggenda*, Bologna, Zanichelle, 1885; R. CALAMANDREI, *Monte Amiata*, Montepulciano, Fumi, 1891, and *Arcidosso e il suo Profeta nel 1878*. Grosseto Tip. di Guiseppe Barbarulli 1878. It is an anonymous pamphlet of 31 pages.

USEFUL INFORMATION

THE best centre from which to explore M. Amiata is unquestionably Abbadia S. Salvatore. The place possesses an inn which, while modest, should satisfy the traveller for a day or two ; but it will not, we think, be likely to suit the English visitor who desires to make a lengthy stay. For such an one there are two alternatives ; either to rent a house or to obtain board and lodging with a private family. In the former case he should apply to Signora ANGELA FOCACCI, Abbadia San Salvatore. Her villa, outside the *Castello*, will be found scrupulously clean and extremely comfortable ; and should this be already taken for the season she can find others. In the latter case, he should write to Dott. ALFREDO VITI, Abbadia S. Salvatore, who occasionally takes paying guests during the summer months. His house is newly built, and situated outside the *Castello*. It is furnished with all modern conveniences (electric light, etc.) ; the table is liberal and the wine excellent.

The accommodation in Abbadia is, however, strictly limited ; and the intending visitor should make his arrangements betimes. Otherwise he may find himself obliged to take up his quarters at the inn, or even to put up with lodgings within the walls of the squalid *Castello*.

With regard to the other villages, it may be mentioned that S. Quirico, Arcidosso, S. Fiora, and Pian Castagnajo all possess passable inns.

The nearest station to Abbadia S. Salvatore is Monte Amiata, on the line from Asciano to Grosseto ; but it can also be reached from Chiusi ; though that will entail a

drive of from five to six hours through Sarteano and Radicofani.

For the motorist and bicyclist coming from Siena, the road to be recommended is that which passes through Buonconvento to Montalcino, and thence, by way of S. Antimo, to Monte Amiata Station. From Monte Amiata the circuit of the Mountain may be made through Arcidosso and S. Fiora, Pian Castagnajo and Abbadia S. Salvatore, to Vignone and S. Quirico. There are a few hills to be walked by a bicyclist, but the trip is by no means a fatiguing one if it be spread over three or four days. It may be further extended by going from S. Quirico to Pienza and Montepulciano, on the line between Siena and Chiusi.

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